A DIVINE MESSAGE to the elect Soul:

DELIVERED

In eight Sermons upon seven severall Texts.

By that laborious and faithful Messenger of CHRIST,

Mr. WILLIAM FENNER,

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AMOS 4. 10. 12.

I have sent unto you the pestilence, after the manner of Egypt; your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses, I have made the stink of the Camp to come up to your nostrils, yet have ye not returned to me, saith the Lord: therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel; and because I will doe this unto thee, prepare to meet me thy God, O Israel.

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THE EPISTLE TO the godly Reader of these pious Sermons.

THE Author of these ensuing Sermons, Mr. *William Fenner*, was so deservedly famous in the Church of God, and so well known unto me in particular, and one to whom I was so much obliged when he was living, as that I could not thinke it sufficient to give a bare

Imprimatur unto his Sermons, but have added this *Testimony* also, that thereby all good people might bee encouraged to read these works of his, whose life and conversation was a continuall Sermon, and who spent himselfe in studying and preaching, and whose memory will bee ever pretious unto

Your loving friend,

Edm. Calamy.

To the Reader.

Good Reader,

THE Author of these Sermons, having served his time, and being fallen asleep, the lot is fallen upon me to appeare in their behalfe, and to seale unto their worth and usefulnesse for publick service, as farre as thou pleasest to seale unto my judgement and faithfulnesse in such a case, with thine opinion and approbation. For the truth is, that the strength and value of my testimony concerning them, is like to extend no further, then thine doth concerning me. So that if I adde any thing to their credit and estimation in the world, by my recommendation, it is by the mediation of thine ingenuity & fairnesse towards me. But if thou shalt please to be at any reasonable cost in the reading of them, and lay thy judgement and conscience as close to the Spirit, as thou must thine eyes to the letter of what thou readest, I make no question but I shall be the gainer, and not they, by this engagement of my selfe for them: true worth especially when

it

it overcomes, and breakes out of the cloud of obscurity, alwayes returnes more then what it receives from any mans testimony: neither is there any method or trade so proper and certaine whereby to raise an estate of honour and reputation to a mans selfe, as the bestowing or casting honour and reputation upon others, so hee bee carefull and dexterous in the choice of his subiect. Iohn Baptist *by giving testimony onely to one, Iesus Christ, out-grew the common stature of those that are born of women, in true greatnesse,* Mat. 11.11. *and yet there was little or nothing (in effect) added to Iesus Christ himself by his testimony,* Ioh. 5. 34. *It is an ingenuous and inoffensive way to serve our selves out of other mens excellencies by advancing them: neither doe the generality of men in their practice, more generally consent upon any principle of reason & equity, then this, to recompence such men with tearmes of honour, who are unpartiall and free in subscribing and acknowledging the worth and eminencie of others. And as many that are but of mean condition in the world otherwise, yet maintaine themselves comfortably, by trimming and dressing the gardens and orchards, and vineyards of rich and wealthy men:*

men: so may men that want other personall abilities, and excellencies of their owne, subsist upon terms of a convenient reputation, onely by vindicating, adorning, and setting forth the endowments, and gracefull parts of other men.

The subject or argument of these Sermons, is partly that noble & high-importing strain of Christian devotiō, preparatiō for that solemn enterview of Jesus Christ in his death at his Table: the great severity of Gods proceedings against despisers of admonitions and reproof. Both theams of saveury consideration for all those that love not death; and more especially for those, who desire not onely to be saved, but to be saved upon sweeter and more comfortable termes then as by fire, 1 Cor. 3. 15. Those that were chastened with weakness, and sickness, and death amongst the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 11. 30. were yet saved, vers. 32. but this was as by or through fire: though they did not perish, were not consumed by the flames of Gods displeasure against them, yet they were sorely scorched with them: the smell of this fire was strong upon the garments of their flesh: They discerned not the body of his Son Iesus Christ, in his ordinances, but in stead of that holy, reverend, and deep-studied behaviour

viour which was due unto it, both from their inner and outward man, as being a creature of the highest and deepest ſanctification that ever God ſanctified: ſanctified not onely to a more excellent and glorious condition, but alſo to many ends and purpoſes of farre higher and deerer concernment, both for the glory of God, and benefit of men themſelves, then all other creatures whatſoever, whether in heaven or in earth: They handled and dealt by it in both kindes, as if it had been but a common or unſanctified thing: thus they diſcerned not the Lords body. And as they diſcerned not his body, ſo neither did God (in ſome ſenſe) diſcerne theirs, but in thoſe ſoare ſtrokes and heavy judgements which he inflicted on them, had them in no other regard or conſideration, then as if they had been the bodies of his enemies, the bodies of wicked and ſinfull men; thus drawing the modell and platform of their puniſhment (as uſually hee doth) from the ſtructure and proportion of their ſin. And if the morall or ſpirituall ſeeds and originals of our outward and bodily afflictions, as ſickneſſes, weakneſſes, either upō our ſelvs or ours, declining eſtates, loſſes, &c. (which ſtill lie deeper then the naturall) were but carefully and narrowly ſought out, it is much

much to be feared we ſhould find a great part of them (at leaſt) in the bowels of the ſame ſin ſo frequent amongſt us, I mean of not diſcerning the Lords body. The juſt and righteous God builds up the breaches that we make upon the honor belonging to the body of his Sonne, with the ruines of that honour which hee had given unto ours in health, ſtrength, life, and many other outward comforts and ſupports. But thou wilt hear more of theſe things in the ſermons themſelvs: the wholſom admonitions & reproofs wherein cõtained, with the reſt of that heavenly proviſiõ for thy ſoul, which thou ſhalt find here gathered together, & laid into thy hand, I hartily wiſh may be ſanctified unto thee by the higheſt hand of the ſanctifier: that ſo thy ſins and corruptions may flie 7. wayes before that Spirit of power which here purſueth them, and never preſume to returne back again unto them more. The God whom wee ſerve, is able to performe this great petition, by Jeſus Chriſt. To whoſe grace the peace of thy ſoule is faithfully and feelingly recommended by

That poore and unworthy
ſervant of Chriſt and his
Church,

John Goodwin.

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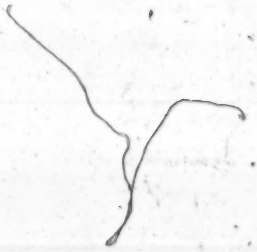

Some choyce Sermons of Mr. FENNERS upon ſeverall Scriptures:

The firſt two upon *Haggai* 1. 5.

The Preface unto them.

THE cauſe of that little heavenlineſſe which is in the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, is the want of meditation. Many can meditate curſorily, but that is not enough: it muſt be a ſticking meditation that muſt affect the heart. That place in 2 *Pet.* 2. 8. is marvellous pregnant, it was the meanes why *Lot* was ſo touched with the abominations of Sodom: *That righteous man dwelling amongſt them, in ſeeing and hearing their ungodly deeds, vexed his righteous ſoul from day to day.* Many heard and ſaw too, beſides *Lot*, and were not vexed. Why? Other matters ſtucke in their thoughts, they never throughly meditated on it; but he *vexed* himſelf, that is, the meditation of thoſe evils, and bring-

ing them home to his soule, vexed him. The word is a fit word, implying two things: First, the searching and examining of a thing, his meditating heart examined their sinnes; how many they were, how grievous, how damnable, how likely to pull down some vengeance or other upon them. Secondly, the wracking or vexing upon triall; so it was with *Lot*, hee observed all their evils, and weighed them in his soul, & then he wracked his spirit with the consideration of them. The Evangelist useth this very word for *tossing*: this word that is here put for *vexing*, he puts for tossing of a ship in the seas, *Matth.14.24. The ship was tossed with the waves*: so meditation did tosse his soule with vexation, sometimes downe to the deep: O miserable wretches that we are! or, How brutish, how beastly, and how hellish are our sinnes? Sometimes up; O that the Lord would humble us and spare us! Sometimes over head and eares in the storme, O foole that I was to chuse my dwelling amongst such men! These meditations vexed his soule: Many have studied meditations, and yet are not acquainted with this cordiall meditation: Many Ministers that study Divinitie all the day, that study the Word all the week, that study their Sermons all the yeare, may yet for all this, be carnall Ministers. Why? Because their meditation is but inventing and mentall meditation; this meditation is a practicall meditation, the thing meditated feeds the heart: that meditation is like a fluttering Pheasant that flutters before their eyes, it feeds their eyes indeed,

but

but never feeds the ſtomach, as long as they neither catch nor eate it. The ſaving myſteries of God flutter before their eyes, and before their underſtandings, they feed their eyes with knowledge, but never feed their ſoules unto everlaſting life, unleſſe they fowle for it, dreſſe and digeſt it in their hearts. There is an apt word *Gen.* 24.63. *Iſaac went out to meditate in the field*: the originall hath it, to ſignifie mutuall conference, his mind conferred with the truth, and the truth with him, a mutuall working hee wrought upon the heart, by meditating of it, and it upon him; by leaving an impreſſion upon his ſoule: this is a rare practice in the world, and yet as neceſſary as moſt, it is the art of the ſoule in being heavenly, it is the inuring of thee to every good duty: for by meditation a man comes to have his mind and heart fixed upon every thing that he would: Would he pray? hee that hath inured his heart to meditate, his mind is fixed in his prayer. Would he receive a Sacrament? He that hath inured his heart by meditation, his mind is fixed in the ordinance. *David* that was excellent at meditation, had a *fixed heart*, *Pſal.* 57.7. *Pſal.* 112.1.7.

HAGGAI 1.5.

Now therefore thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, Conſider your wayes.

THe Prophet reproveth the people becauſe they could find in their hearts to mind their own houſes, and yet were careleſſe of the houſe

of the Lord: the Lord had sent a drought, and a famine, and sundry punishments upon them for this thing, and yet they laid it not to heart, and therefore he sends *Haggai* the Prophet unto them to call them to repentance; & which is an admirable course, and little thought of in the world; he begins with holy meditation and consideration: *Now therefore thus saith the Lord, Consider your wayes*; that is, both in regard of the course of them, your wicked wayes; and also in regard of the bitter fruit of them, your wretched and unprosperous wayes. Here bee two things very remarkable according to the Text;

1. The repetition and inforcing of it again; for he urgeth it again, *Consider your wayes*, in the seventh verse.

2. The benefit that came by it, it brought them to repentance; for *they all obeyed the voyce of the Lord, and the words of the Prophet*, verse 12. So that the Doctrine from hence is this, that,

Doct. 1. Serious meditation of our sins by the Word, is a speciall means to make men repent.

Meditation is a setled exercise of the mind for a further inquiry of the truth, and so affecting the heart therewith; and therefore there bee foure things in meditation.

1. The first is an exercise of the mind, not barely closing with the truth, and assenting unto it, and seeing it, and there rests; but it looketh on every side of the truth: *I thought upon my wayes, and turned my feet unto thy Testimonies*, *Psal.* 119. 59. saith *David*; that is, I looked on my wayes on both sides, above and beneath; it's taken from curious

curious works, which are the ſame on both ſides, ſo that they which work them, muſt often turn them on every ſide, uſed *Exod.* 38. 23. as being workes with two faces, as one well obſerves: ſo it was with *David*, I turned my wayes up-ſide downe, and looked every way upon them: thou never meditateſt, unleſſe thou look on thy wayes on both ſides with all circumſtances. An elegant phraſe we have, *Dan.* 12. 4. *Many ſhall run to and fro, and knowledge ſhall abound, and bee increaſed.* [*Run to and fro*] what is that? It is not the bodily removing of man from one place to another ſo much, as buſie ſtirring of the mind from one truth to another, ſo that it ſeeth the whole ſelvedge and compaſſe of the truth: thou wilt never get the truth to be meditated of, till thou runne to and fro in it, meditate it on this ſide, and meditate it on that ſide, looke on it in every nook of it. Meditation is like perambulation, when men goe the bounds of the Pariſh they goe in every part of it, and in every skirt of it: ſo meditation is the perambulation of the ſoule, when the ſoule lookes how far ſinne goes, how far the fleſh goes, how far the wrath of God againſt it goes.

Secondly, as it is an exerciſe, ſo it is a ſetled exerciſe, it is not a ſudden flaſh of a mans conceit, but it dwels upon a truth. When a man is in a deep meditation upon a thing, he neither ſees nor hears, nor attends any thing elſe; the ſtream of the heart is ſetled upon the truth received; *The word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the world*, 1 *Ioh.* 2. 14. How came theſe *young* 2.

men to overcome Satan? Not by looking into the Word, or onely thinking of the Word; but by letting the Word *abide* in them. When a man hath been offered an injury, his heart is alwayes setled upon it; when he eates, his mind runnes on the injury; when he walkes, and talkes, still his mind runnes on the injury: so thy heart must goe on the truth. 2 *Tim.* 3. *Continue in the things thou hast learned:* that is, take up thy mansion house in them. A wicked man may turn into the word sometimes to think of it; but it is as a man goes into another mans house: there is not his dwelling.

3. Thirdly, it is to make a further inquiry: Meditation doth not onely settle upon the truth known; but it also would faine know more of those truths, that are subjected to it; as a man without might see the out-side of the house, but he could not see the roomes within, unlesse hee come nigh, and draw the latch, and come into the house, and goe into the roomes, and look about them. Meditation pulls the latch of the truth, and lookes into every closet, and every cubboard, and every angle of it. Here is my sin, here is my uncleanesse, and here is Gods anger, here is the wofull evill that will follow upon it, and here is a remedy against it. Meditation searches into all the lofts and closets of the truth. *The entrance of thy word giveth understanding unto the simple, Psal.* 119. 30. The ingresse (as one expounds it) or going into thy word, gives understanding; the wicked stand looking upon the truth without the doores, but it is the ingresse,

or

or going into the truth, that gives understanding. Indeed the truth is like a neat palace, (saith *Chrysostome*) the Spirit of God is like the light of the Sunne that shineth into it; the wicked they stand without, like fooles peeping in at the windowes, and there bee many thousands of Pearles that are not manifest unto them: The house seems dark to them that stand without. Thou must enter into the word, and into every particular truth in it, and goe up staires, and down staires, and have an eye into every roome. There thou shalt find humility, there contrition, there conversion, there Christ and his Spirit in one closet, there all his Jewels in that, and that box: all is manifest within doores.

Fourthly, it labours to affect the heart; it doth not onely labour to know more and more of the truth, but also it labours to bring it home to the heart. *The good woman considers a field and buyes it, Prov.* 31. 16. that is, (saith *Ambrose*) the good Christian soule, if in civilitie, then much more in Divinity, considers the truth and buyes it, he taketh it for his own, and appropriates it unto himselfe; *Lo this* (saith *Eliphas*) *wee have searched out: so it is, heare it, and know it for thy selfe, Job.* 5. 27. When thou canst say of the truth, loe this it is, we have searched it out; I have dived into it, perused it, so it is, even so indeed: all this is, that thou mayest apply it unto thy selfe, and *know it for thy good.* 4.

The first Reason is, because meditation musters up all weapons, and gathers all forces of arguments for to presse the same, and lay them Reason 1.

heavie upon the heart: This usurie is spirituall and good, when meditation, like usurers, who grinde and suck the blood of the needy, and are not content with their principall, but will have consideration for every pound they lay out; yea for every shilling, and that for every week, and every month, and every quarter, and every yeare: the poore man could bee content to pay the principall, to exact use upon use, this kills him; so meditation exacteth upon the soule, and holdeth it to use upon use. You have committed evil in a corner, but you shal not carry it away so. Item, it was against the knowledge of God revealed; Item, against many mercies received; Item, against many judgments threatned, against many checks of conscience, against many vows & promises; remember that, O my soul. Item for that, & Item for this, Item for every lust, & every circumstance, thus oft, and in this place, & at that time, in that manner, So meditated the Luk 15.17 Prodigall. Looke as it is in warres; were there but many scores come against an Army, they might be conquered, or many hundreds, they might be resisted; but if many thousands should come against a small army, it would be in danger indeed. Meditation leavieth a whole Army of arguments, a whole Army of curses, miseries, judgements, commandements against the soul: how ever one misery or plague will not knock it down, but the soule may brook it, and goe away with it: but meditation brings a great Armado of arguments, and tells the soule God is against thee, and against thy wayes: God is against

againſt thee where ever thou art, or what ever thou doeſt. Then the heart begins to cry out, as *Eliſha* his ſervant did, *Maſter, what ſhall we doe?* 2 *Kings* 6. 15. So many horſes againſt us, ſo many charets, and ſo many men againſt us, Maſter, what ſhall we doe? ſo many ſinnes, and ſo heynous, ſo many judgements and ſo heavie, and ſo many evils and ſpirituall maladies, Oh, what ſhall I doe to be ſaved! that I ſhould commit ſinne againſt a God that hath damned innumerable Angels, millions of Kings, Princes, and Nobles, that I ſhould commit it againſt this God, ſo mercifull to me, ſo gracious, ſo patient, ſo good to my ſoule, that I, wretched rebell, ſhould for a cup of drink refuſe heaven, for a luſt not worth a ſtraw under my foot, caſt off Chriſt, and grace and all: how ſhall I doe? Then the ſoule ſtands in a maze.

Read this

The ſecond Reaſon is, becauſe meditation having bundled up all Items againſt the ſoule, and brought in all bills of account, it faſtens ſin upon the ſoule, I mean it makes the ſoule feele it, ſo that it muſt needs be convinced without any evaſion. Meditation deals with a man, as *Eliſha* dealt with the meſſengers of King *Joram*, the murderer he was comming to doe miſchiefe to the Prophet, and the Prophet did ſhut the door, and held him faſt at the door, 2 Kings 6. 32. and then he made him know that the evill was from the Lord, before he could ſtirre: ſo meditation, when the ſoule would fain out of doores into its old courſe againe, it ſhuts the doore upon it, and holds it faſt: Meditation tells the ſoule, this evill

Reaſ. 2.

evill is from the Lord upon thee, O my ſoule, if thou ſtirre in or out upon this or that luſt any more; this evill, that curſe, that vengeance and damnation, if ever thou ſtirre forth, thou loſeſt thy mercy, thou loſeſt Chriſt, thou loſeſt all poſſibility of comfort. Stirre not out, if thou doſt thou wilt rue it. Sometimes when men heare the word, they goe away touched, they reſolve not to commit ſinne again as they have done; yet when they are gone, it workes not, but the heart recoyles again, and turnes to its old paſſe. The reaſon is, becauſe they meditate not upon the word, they faſten it not upon their conſciences.

It is with the word as it is wth a ſalve: if a man that hath never ſo good a ſalve that will heale any thing in foure and twenty houres, if a man ſhould doe nothing but lay it to the wound, and take it off, lay it on and take it off, it will not heale the wound: and no marvell. Why? he will not let it lie on, the beſt ſalve will not heal the ſoare, nor eate out the corruption, unleſſe it be bound on, and let lie: ſo it is with the word, many a ſoule heares it, heart, conſcience, affections, all toucht: but when he is gone out of the Church, all is gone, his affections die, his heart dies, and his conſcience becomes unfruitfull. Why? he is ſtill removing of the ſalve, and will not let it lie on, and therefore the word over-powers not his corruptions: the word is like the ſalve, conviction of conſcience is like the laying on of the ſalve; meditation the binding of it to the ſoare.

S

S^t. *Iames* compares a ſlight hearer to a man that *lookes into a glaſs*, who ſoon *forgets* his viſage; but a good hearer doth two things: Firſt, hee *ſtoopes down and lookes into it*, to take a perfect view of his eſtate; Secondly, he *continues looking into it*, *Iames* 1. 25. he doth not leave the glaſſe behind him, but he carrieth away the glaſſe with him: *This man ſhall be bleſſed in his deed.*

If the pills bee never ſo bitter, yet let a man ſwallow them ſpeedily, there is no great diſtaſte; but if a man chew a pill, it will make him deadly ſick. Thy ſinnes are like thoſe pills, they goe down very pleaſingly, becauſe thou ſwalloweſt them: thou ſwalloweſt down thine oathes, lies, ignorance, pride, thou ſwalloweſt downe the threats of the Lord; but if thou wouldeſt chew theſe bitter pills, and meditate and ruminate, and chew the cud, drunkenneſſe would be as bitter as hell, ſwearing, and ſecurity, and Sabbath-breaking, would be as bitter as wormwood, thou durſt not go on in them, they would make thee look ſourly upon them for ever: like a man that hath chewed a pill, he can hardly ever ſee a pill, but his ſtomach riſeth againſt it. *Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thornes*, *Hoſea* 2. 6. I will not be ſo preciſe (ſaith the heart) I will goe on as I have done, I will goe after theſe and theſe courſes; *I will hedge up thy way with thorns*, (ſaith God;) meditation is Gods inſtrument, and ſets a thorne in the way to every ſinne, to bring the heart backe again. Would the heart laſh out into luke-warmneſſe? Meditation ſets a thorn in the way; God will ſpue thee out of his mouth:

mouth: Would the heart ſally forth into any ſinne? Meditation ſets a thorn in the way, Curſed art thou if thou doeſt erre from Gods Commandements. The heart cannot ſtep forth into any luſt; but meditation meets it with a thorn, this curſe, and that curſe, this plague, and that plague. Would the heart reach at mercy in its ſinne? Meditation pricks it from it; mercie is vengeance unto thee, ſo long as thou hankreſt after ſinne: would the heart reach after Chriſt in his ſinne? Meditation puſhes it back with a thorn: No Chriſt for thee, but a ſevere Judge, ſo long as thou itcheſt after thy vanities.

Use I. What ſhall we think of them then, which are loath to practiſe this dutie? Moſt men are loath, though they bee willing enough to meditate on their worldly affaires. The Mariner meditates and conſiders his courſe by his Compaſs, or elſe hee might ſoon runne on the quick-ſands; a Pilgrime is full of thoughts; what, am I in my right way? He never comes to a doubtfull turning, but he ſtands in a ſtudy & muſes, O which is my right way? The Merchant meditates, and his minde runnes on his Count-book, or elſe he is ſoone bankrupt: The voluptuous man, his thoughts run on his pleaſures: the drunkards on his cups, the proud mans on his credit. But it is one thing to looke to that which is thine, and another thing to looke to thy ſelfe, *Take heed to your ſelves*, ſaith the Lord, *Deut.* 11. 16. *Deut.* 12. 30. *Deut.* 4. 9. *Exod.* 34. 12. as if he ſhould ſay, think on thy ſelf and of thy poor ſoul, let thy meditation run on thy poore ſoule. The heart is untoward

unto

unto this duty, and as unwilling as a Bear to the ſtake: the Beare would rather bee rambling abroad, then be baited: ſo men had rather let their hearts ramble about any thing, then bait them for their ſinnes; yea men ſcoffe at it, ſaying, ſhall we alwayes bee poring on our ſinnes? ſhall wee run mad? ſhall we drive our ſelves to deſpaire? cannot men keep themſelves well while they are well?

The poore man he hath no time for this tedious duty: the rich man, he needes it not: the wicked they dare not; ſo no man will: *No man repented him of his wickedneſs, ſaying, What have I done? Ier.* 8. *6.* No man would meditate and thinke with himſelfe, what is my caſe? how ſtands my condition before God? what evill have I done? In the Ark, and in the old Law, if there were any beaſt that chewed not the cud, it was a ſigne of an unclean beaſt: the word implies the bringing up of their meat into their mouthes again, and ſitting downe to chew it again. But now men, like unclean beaſts, ſwallow downe the food of their ſoules unchewed, and will not meditate thereof, that it may turne to good nutriment; but like Cormorants, they take it down by whole-ſale, and are never the better. So the word is to them as the Quailes to the Iſraelites, while the fleſh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled againſt them, and ſmote them with a very great plague, *Numb.* 11. 33. ſo the word of God ſtickes in their teeth; ere they chew it, or meditate upon it, the wrath of God falls

falls upon them, and ſtrikes them with a ve
great plague of hardneſſe of heart, and lea
neſſe of ſoule. But the truth is, you that will n
now ſee your ſinnes, nor meditate on them, yo
ſhall ſee them, and meditate on nothing but
feare. *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they wi
not ſee, but they ſhall ſee and will bee aſhamed*, Eſa
26. 11.

Let 1. Now the Lets of ſerious meditation are, Firſt
vain company. When *Peter* ſaw the people tou
ched, *Acts* 2. 37. and he ſaid unto them, *Sa
your ſelves from this untoward generation, verſ.* 4
as if he ſhould ſay, If you love your ſelves, Go
hath touched your hearts, ſuffer not Satan, an
theſe wicked inſtruments, to ſcale away thei
impreſſions of terror from your ſoules. If eve
you love your ſoules, ſort not your ſelves wit
this untoward generation. See as it humbles you
ſo let meditation follow upon it, ſo that it ma
ſtill humble you. Ill company brings a man t
the gallowes (as the proverb is) and ill compan
will bring a man to hell (ſay I:) and meditatio
cannot be admitted to it. *David* would not hav
a wicked man to abide in his ſight, when he wa
to meditate: he wiſht that there were never
wicked man in the world; much leſſe would h
keep company with them. *My meditation of hi
ſhall be ſweet; let the ſinners be conſumed out of th
earth, and let the wicked be no more: Bleſs thou th
Lord, O my ſoul, Pſal.* 104. 35.

Let 2. The ſecond let is, multitude of worldly buſi-
neſſe: *A dream* (ſaith *Solomon*) *comes through mul
titude of buſineſs, Eccleſ.* 5. Multitude of buſines
cauſeth

causeth the mind so to run on them, that they do even dream of them in their sleep, as *Lucretius*, *Seneca*, *Claudian*, & many others of the heathens have observed. He that over-imployes himself, his meditations of heaven are dreaming meditations, his thoughts dreaming thoughts, he can never seriously meditate on the good of his soul. Many ingrosse businesse into their hands, never thinking they have enough; they are so greedy after the world, and so careless of heaven. So they make their hearts like high-way ground: the word sown in their hearts is like seed sown in the high-way, where is such a through-fare, and a broad Carriers road of earthly affairs, that all the word, and meditation thereof, is troden down as the grass in the high-way, which cannot grow; so neither meditation in a busie-bodied heart. For a good meditating mind, (*Nemo ad illam pervenit occupatus*, saith *Seneca*) no man ever came to it surfeited with imployments. *David* although he had abundance of State affairs both his hands full, yet hee would not have his hands to be over-charged, but that he might meditate in Gods word: *My hands also* (not all downe to businesse onely in the world, but also up to thy Law) *will I lift up to thy commandements which I have loved, and I will meditate on thy statutes*, *Psal.* 119. 48. Take not too much upon thee, like those grasping worldlings, that wil have a finger in a hundred things: *Martha, Martha, thou art cumbred about many things, but one thing is needfull, and Mary hath chosen the better part*, *Luk.* 10 41 and what was that *one thing*? *Mary* was sitting and

and meditating in, and pondring Christs wor
not (as *Theophylact* expounds it) as if he wo
say, *Martha, Martha*, thou art cumbred ab
many dishes, but one thing is needfull, only
dish; though indeed so it be, yet he here spea
of not only of one dish, but of many cares wh
hinder that one necessary dutie of hearing
meditating on the word of God.

3. Thirdly, ignorance. A man cannnot medit
of a thing he knows not; nor thou of thy sinn
if thou be not skilfull in Gods catalogue of
sinnes; nor of mercies and promises, if thou be
not verst in them; nor of his precepts, if thou
not be not expert in them. The *Psalmist* prove
that hee had more knowledge then all his Te
chers: Why? Because hee used to meditate.
have more understanding then all my Tutors, for
testimonies are my meditation, Psal. 119. 99.

4. Fourthly, aversnesse of the heart: The heart
like the swine, meditation is like the yoke:
Hogge would fain get into forbidden fields
to grub them, the yoke that hinders him;
he cannot abide it, every step he takes, he lifts
his foot to strike it up if he could; so the he
would fain break through hedges, and get in
forbidden wayes, and if thou wouldest medita
it would every moment lift up its heele to
thee besides it: If it cannot put thee besides it,
will marre it if it can; and therefore *David* pra
to God to settle his heart upon the right, a
put his yoke upon him, or it would never b
stedfast else upon meditation. *Let the words of*
mouth, and the meditations of my heart, bee ever
cepta

ceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer, Psal. 19. 14.

This averseness of the heart consists in three things: First, in the carelessnesse of the heart, the heart prizeth not meditation, nor the things of grace that are to be meditated on, it will not be at the cost and charge, nor at the paines for them. *To what end is a price in the hands of a foole, seeing there is no heart to get wisedome?* Prov. 17. 16. The heart will not bee brought to Gods price; it would fain have the wares at a cheap rate. 1.

Secondly, in the runnings of it; the heart is like a vagrant Rogue, he would rather bee hanged then tied to his parish. Thou canst not bring it to prayer, but it will bee a gadding on by-thoughts: thou canst not bring it to a Sermon, but it will be roving after wandring imaginations; thou canst not bring it to a meditation, but it will bee a gossiping forth. When Christ came to bind men with his blessed cords, and bind their hearts to him, *Psal.* 2. they fall a meditating afterwards, but it was meditating and imagining vain things, *vers.* 1. and when they saw they were to be tied up; *Tush* (say they) *let us break their bonds asunder, and cast their cords from us, verse* 3. What, doe Ministers call us to such strictnesse, thinking to impuison our hearts in their stockes? Away with their bonds, no wee will have none of it. 2.

Thirdly, in the wearisomnesse of the heart: It is as weary of meditation, as a Cur is of the whip, and the chain; Oh how it barkes and 3.

maunders, till it bee loose: yea, though it be never so eager upon it at the first, it's jaded presently. When God called the Jews to sanctifie his Name, they thought in their hearts, *O what a wearinesse is this? and yee have snuffed at it, (saith the Lord) yee brought that which was lame, and torne, and sicke, Malac.* 1. 13. What a wearinesse is it to meditate? (saith the heart) it snuffs, it is untoward, it is lumpish; it would fain teare off a piece of the duty, or bring it wanting a legge, or without soundnesse and sincerity; yet some of them (saith *Calvin*) were so humbled, that they *thought on the Name of the Lord, Malac.* 3. 16. they thought, and meditated, and forced their hearts to consider throughly.

Use. This may serve for terror unto all those, who for all this that hath been spoken, dare sit down without it; yea, the world will not beleeve these things, nor meditate therein: yea, they blame Gods Messengers, that call so fore upon them. *Habakkuk* was so served, hee preached the mercies of God to the humble, and the judgments of God to the wicked: they ask him why he was so mad: Well (sayes the Prophet) *I will stand upon my watch, and see what the Lord sayes unto me, that I may answer to them that reprove me, Hab.* 2. 1. What did the Lord tell him? *Write the vision, and make it plain upon Tables, that he may run that reads it, vers.* 2. Will they not beleeve? Will they rove? Will they not meditate steadily upon these things? Will they not let their hearts stay and meditate and consider? The vision shall be so plain, that hee that runs

may

may read it. If thou wilt not ſtay, and meditate herein, the Word is ſo plain to thy condemnation, that if thou didſt but think of it with a running thought, thou maiſt read thine owne vengeance, thine owne woes, in regard of the multitude of them. He that runnes by a way full of holes and pits, though he ſtand not meditating where are the pits, yet he may run and ſee them. The book of God is full, leaves and cover, and all, of woes againſt thee, *Lam.* 2. 16. It is written without, there thou maiſt read thy ſins written; it is written likewiſe within, there thou maiſt read thy plagues.

Secondly, in regard of the greatneſſe of them; he that runnes along, and loe a great towne on fire, though he ſtay not to meditate on it, what or where it is, yet he may runne and read it: ſo is the curſe of ſinners a great curſe, *Zeph.* 1. 10. he that runnes may read it.

Thirdly, in regard of the proximitie and neerneſſe of them. Hee that runnes, if a ſword come out by his throat, though he do not ſtop to meditate, what is this at my throat, yet he cannot but ſee it. *Behold the Judge ſtandeth before the doore*, Iam. 5. 9. Take heed how thou grudgeſt, or ſinneſt in any particular, behold the Judge ſtandeth before the doore; behold it, and meditate on it with thy heart; if not, hee is nigh enough, thou canſt not ſtep out of doores unto any ſinne, but though thou runneſt, thou muſt needs ſee the Judge that wil judge thee, Iteming thy ſinnes, noting thy wayes, obſerving thy courſes, ready to unhaſpe the doore on thee, to

hale thee unto hell in thy sinnes. *Whose end is destruction.* Whose? Even those that *mind earthly things, Phil.* 3. 19. If thy mind and meditation run more on thy ground, cattell, goods, kitchin, house-busines, earthly talk, discourses, though more then of heaven, thy end is destruction. thy thoughts will not stay here, doe but runne and thou maist read it; *Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets, I am come to fulfill them, Mat.* 5. 17. Some (saith *Chrysostom*) might think now Christ is come, it is no matter though wee bee not so strict; Christ is enough. Think not thus (saith Christ) but rather think and meditate that I am come to fulfill it my self and to see it fulfilled in those I mean to save, as to make it the rule of their lives. *Themistocles* said, he could not sleep in his bed for continuall thinking and meditating on *Miltiades* his Triumphs: And how canst thou sleep in thy bed, if thou wouldest but meditate on these places of Scripture? Retire thy selfe a part, there is no casting up of a mans account in a crowd: Let me alone, I am busie; so wee use to say, when we would be private. Thou must doe with thy soule as *Ehud* did to *Eglon*, who said, *I have a secret errant to thee, O King*, and so all went out, and he said, *I have a message from God to thee*, and *stabd him* at his heart, *Judg.* 3. 19. So (for *Ehud* was a type of Christ, saith *Lavator*) I have a secret errant to thee, O my soule: and so let all goe forth: I have a message from God to thee, a message of wrath for thy pride, a message of wrath for thy vain hopes: Thus, saith the Lord,

Curse

Cursed art thou, O my soule, stab it to the heart with this spirituall Dagger, wound it with the blade and haft and all, till thou have let out the fat and the dirt, the filth and iniquitie all out. The Prophet speaking of mens looking on Christ, whom they have *pierced*, this meditating and laying to heart that they have crucified the Lord Jesus, saith that *they shall mourne every one in private, the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the house of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; every family apart, and their wives apart*, Zach. 12. 12.

The second meanes, if thou wouldst meditate aright, observe the times of privacie.

Means 2

First, the morning, that is the best time for study; *David* chose the morning for meditation, *Psal.* 5. 1. 3. Let them heare this (saith *Chrysostome*) that rise betimes in the morning to serve their Hogges and their Dogges, their bellies and their backes, before they serve God in meditation or prayer, unless it be the mumbling and roting a few [Lord have mercy upon us] that pray not till after many other businesses, it may be not then neither. *David* prayed and meditated in the morning; In the morning thou washest thy face and thy hands, but thy soul hath more need, which thou washest not: in the morning thou puttest thy cloathes on thy body; but thou puttest not on afresh the new man upon thy soule: in the morning thou shakest off sleepinesse from thine eyes, but thou shakest not off drowsinesse from thy soule. Thou lookest into

the glasse in the morning, to see if thy face be it should be; but thy soul is not composedly lo king into the glasse of Gods word. In the mo ning look up in prayer, look up in thanksgivi look up in meditation.

2. Secondly, the night too, *O Lord, I meditate thee in the night watches*, Ps. 63. not as carnal' do, who when they cannot sleep, then their m runnes on their Cow and their Calfe, their m kets and vanities, this neighbour and that nei bour, like *Petronius* his dogge, that was hu ing while he lay asleep in his kennell.

3. Thirdly, in the evening; *I prevent the ni watches, that I might meditate*, Psal. 119. 148. did not as wicked men doe, sleep like a horse the stable on his litter, with his necke tied to manger: they go to bed with their hearts ro to the world, worldly thoughts, this thought that thought, and God knowes what.

4. Fourthly, when the heart is touched at a S mon, or Sacrament, or observing of any judg ment or mercy, or act of Gods providence, i best striking when the Iron is hot. *David* w his heart was touched at the reproaches of wicked, then he *meditated*, Ps. 119. 23. When Instrument is in tune, then it is good playing u on it; when a Churle is in a good mood, then is fittest to deale with him. Oft will thy heart out of tune, oft churlish and in an ill mood: thou lettest the opportunity go, thou knowst when thou shalt have such another. When fish is nibbling at the bait, then it is good twitc ing at the angle-rod: when the heart is a nibbli

at grace, then give a pluck at it by meditation. See *Act.* 17. 11. now while the tide lasts, see thou mayst get into the haven.

Thirdly, rub up thy selfe and thy memory, call as much to mind as thou canst; what evill thou hast done ever since thou wast borne, what in the womb, what in thy cradle, childhood, youth, age, what a servant, what a master, what as a servant, what as a sonne, what as a neighbour, what as an inferiour, what as a superiour, either in thought, or word, or deed; how often thou hast omitted good duties, or done them by halves; Item for this, and Item for that. They shall *remember themselves, and turne unto the Lord*, *Psal.* 22. 27. First, they shall *remember themselves*, and say, What have I done, O wretch! how carelesly have I lived! Secondly, so meditating, they shall *turn unto the Lord*. Many say, Oh! they cannot remember their sinnes. They lie in a thousand particulars: for they can remember to commit them wel enough. See *Lam.* 3. 19, 20, 21. our Greek translation turnes it, *I spake to my selfe, and meditated*: as if they should say, O what a rebell have I been! how unthankfull, how unprofitable under all the meanes of grace! I may thank my sins for all the plagues of the Almighty that are upon me: if hee had damned me, I had been well served. What followes? *The heart bowed, and was humbled*, as it is in the text. *Means* 3

The fourth meanes: Rouze up thy heart. As it is with the eye of the body, so it is with the eye of the soul: when a man would look wishly *Means* 4

upon a thing, as if hee would looke through it, he sets his eyes on it, as *Paul* set his eyes on *Elymas*, *Ah thou child of the Devil, thou, &c.* Act. 13. 9. Meditation is the setting of the eye of the soul upon a thing: set thine eye upon thy selfe, and say, Ah thou child of the wicked, why hath Satan filled thy heart? O wretched heart! whence hadst thou thy self-love? hadst thou not it from the Devill? God might doe well to send thee to the Devill, if thou lovest so to bee his Broker. Set thine eyes stedfastly upon thine owne wayes, and thou shalt see infinite hellish evils in thy sinnes.

Use 3. The third use is for reprehension. What is more usuall then this, that men make sleight account of their sins? Nay, when God tells them in their hearts, Thou shalt not do this, thou shalt not doe that, yet they meditate and think, Why may I not? *Samuel* bid *Saul* stay for direction from him, before hee sacrificed unto God. It seemes that God spake to his heart, Stay till *Samuel* comes to direct thee; yet *Saul forced himself* to disobey, and to doe sacrifice, 1. *Sam.* 13. 12. he was bold, as *Vatable* turnes it; hee *constrained himselfe*, as *Pagnim* translates it: hee thrust himselfe upon the doing of it. God forbad him, he would doe it: God urged him in his conscience not to doe it, yet he would doe it: God again whispered to him to doe it not, yet hee forced himselfe to doe it, as if he should say, I hope I may doe it, I have stayed seven dayes wanting an houre, or a piece of an houre, and a little piece breakes no squares. No? God rejected *Saul* for

or that venture; God would have forced him y meditation; O no, doe it not by no meanes: e made him think, Oh it is against Gods com-nandements, I may not doe it. No, but never-heleſſe he forced himſelfe to doe it. Thus God eals with thouſands and millions in the world: Be not a drunkard; God ſlings the meditation in-o the conſcience, yet a drunkard thou wilt be: Be ot a drunkard again; a drunkard notwithſtan-ing thou wilt be: Be not again, they force them-elves, they will goe to the Ale-houſe. And ſo of ll other ſinnes. If men will caſt off this work f meditation darted into their ſoules, they caſt off their own mercy. God tells them, pray not, hear not, offer not, without directions from me; hey dread not the commandement, they will: I ruſt prayers are good, I will ſay them. Thus hey will not meditate, or if they doe, they break t off before it comes to any ſtrength or perfecti-on: yea, Gods own ſervants, that deſire to look towards Sion, is not this your complaint oft: I cannot find ſinne heavie: I confeſſe the Word diſcovers it to me, but I cannot bee troubled for it? Look as it is with men in the world, if five hundred pounds weight bee laid upon the ground, if a man never plucke at it, he ſhall ne-ver feele the weight of it. Your ſinnes are not many hundreds, but many thouſands, yea many ten thouſands: ſelfe-love, ſecurity, hardneſſe of heart, baſe fears, &c. it is impoſſible to rec-kon them. The leaſt vain thought that ever you imagined, the leaſt vain word that ever you ut-tered, were weight enough to preſſe your ſoules down

down to hell. Therefore what are so many and so great, and so often committed? What are they? they are as heavie as rocks and mountains; yet yee feele them not so heavie. Why? Ye weigh them not, if yee did, yee should find them heavier then the sand, as *David* did when *his sinne was ever before him* (*Psal.* 51. 3.) that his sinne was ever in his thoughts, and in his meditation, his sinne was ever like a huge mighty stone before him, and he was ever tugging and pulling to remove it out of his way.

Object. But you will say, How shall I come to find my burden?

Answer. I answer, three things are here to bee discovered.

First, the ground upon which our meditation must be raised.

Secondly, the manner how to follow it home to the heart.

Thirdly, how to put life and power in it.

1. The ground I referre to these foure heads. First, meditate on the goodnesse, patience, and mercy of God, that hath been abused by any of your sins: the greater they have been to you, the greater is every sinne: this maketh them out of measure sinfull, because God is out of measure mercifull. There are many sinnes in one, when a man sinnes against many mercies. See *Iudg.* 2, 3. *Why have yee done thus?* I have done thus and thus mercifully unto you; why have yee done thus unthankfully to me? Why was my mercie abused? Why was my goodnesse slighted? why was my patience despised? as if

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Lord should say, I speak to your owne conscien-ces, thinke of it, meditate of it, why have yee done this? Doe yee thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Is not hee thy Fa-ther? Meditate of it first, and tell me then. For it is a question put to thy meditation to answer. Doe yee thus requite the Lord ye foolish people? Wert thou ever in want, but God supplied thee? Wert thou ever in weakenesse, but God strengthened thee? Wert thou ever in straits, but God delivered thee? When thou wert in sicknesse, he cured thee: when thou wert in poverty, who re-lieved thee? when thou wert in misery, who succoured thee? Hath not God been a gracious God to thee? Every soule can tell, never poore sinner hath had a more gracious God, then I poore sinner have found to my soule. All my bones can say, Lord, who hath been like unto thee? This heart hath been heavie, and thou hast cheered it: this soul hath been distressed, & thou hast eased it: many troubles have befallen me, and thou hast given me a gracious issue. *This poore man* (saith *David*, pointing to himselfe) this poore man *cried, and the Lord heard him*, *Psa.* 34. 6. And shall I thus reward the Lord? shall I sinne against this goodnesse? Then what shall I say? Heare, O heavens, and hearken, O earth; Sunne, stand thou still, and thou Moon bee amazed at this, and be avenged on such a heart as this. *The Oxe knowes his Owner, and the Asse his Masters Crib*; but here is a heart that will not re-member to know the Lord. Heare, O heavens, this villany crieth so loud, that your eares may

heare

heare it. Hear all yee Angels, and be astonish here is villany to make your eares glow: y hear Hell, hear Devils, if ever there were wo committed by you. When men are but inge ous, if they have received any kindnesse fro friend, they were never in want, but hee rel them, never harbourlesse, but hee housed the never to seek, but hee found them: Let a m deale thus kindly with a man, if this man shou deny him any ordinary favour, he will be ash med of himselfe, ashamed to come into his p sence. What will he think, his house was min his cubboard was mine, and his purse was min and his friends were mine, and that I shou deale thus unkindly with him, even nature r bukes me. This serious meditation will help breake thy heart.

The second ground of meditation is to med tate on the justice of God: God is a just God well as merciful. Speak all yee Devils in hel Doe yee not feele that he is a just God? Spea Sodome, speake Gomorrah, your fire and brim stone can testifie that he is a just God: Speak *dah*, *Zillah*, and all yee that were drowned the old world, your deluge can testifie he is a ju God, *His judgements are in all the world*, 1 *Chro* 16.14. What is become of drunken *Nabal*, an swearing *Saul*, and covetous *Ahab*, and prou *Iesabel*, and mocking *Iehu*, and envious *Shimei* What is become of all blind Jebusites, and pra ting cavilling *Diotrepheses*? Justice hath taken hold of them. What is poverty? What is na kednesse? What is famine, sickenesse, the gout,

the

the ſtone, Feaver, plague? Theſe are the little arrowes of Gods juſtice. What is ſhame, diſgrace, croſſes, afflictions, unſeaſonable raines, dangerous weather, warres, rumours of warres? What are all the evils under the Sunne? They are the little finger of Gods juſtice. Thou ſpieſt them here and there, in every Town, and in every Pariſh, in every Countrey: doe they not all witneſſe that he is a juſt God? Read *Pſalm* 7. 11, 12, 13. *God hath bent his bow* already (ſaith *David*) the arrow is *ready* to flie out of the ſtring: It will not be long before it hit thee, if thou meditate not upon amendment: *God is angry with the wicked every day*, as an angry man uſeth to ſay, I will be revenged on thee: Wilt thou not give over thy ſins? I will be revenged on thee. Read *Pſal.* 11. 5, 6, 7. Meditate on this, he will neither ſpare King nor ſubject, nor rich nor poore, nor noble nor baſe, nor Judges and Juſtices: yet Judges and Juſtices may ſpare, but God will not ſpare: they may bee bribed to pardon, but God will not be feed to ſpare them that goe on in their wickedneſſe; and doe I think to eſcape? Nay, my ſoule, thou canſt never eſcape, except thou obeyeſt.

The third ground is, Meditate on the wrath of God; Oh! what wrath is it? Can I ſtand againſt it? *It burns like an Oven, and all the proud, and all that doe wickedly, ſhall be as ſtubble, and the day of wrath ſhall burne them up.* *Behold this*, ſaith the Text. *Malac.* 4. 1. Behold it, and meditate on it. Can I goe naked into a hot fiery oven? Can I lift up my hands againſt it? My hands will

will be scorched. Can I kick against it? My h
will bee baked. Can I blow upon it with
mouth? my mouth is fiered? Did I ever see li
burned? were I in the limes roome, could I
dare that boyling? and yet if I live in my sin
I shall be *as the burning of lime, Isai.* 33. 12.
thy heart meditate terror: *Who among us sha*
able to *dwell* (that is the meaning of it, as *D*
tanus sheweth) who among us shall dwell
devouring fire? who among us shall burn with e
lasting burnings? vers. 14. Gods mercie
say, Take him wrath: I would have conve
him, but hee would not. Gods goodnesse
say, Take him wrath: I would have been k
unto him, but he hath abused me. Gods pati
shall say, Take him wrath: I have suffered
a great while, that he might have time of rep
tance, but hee repented not in that time.
smote Egypt in their first-borne? Why? *Fo*
mercy endureth for ever. God overthrew Pharaoh
his hoast: Why? *For his mercy endureth for e*
Psal. 136. 15. *He smote great Kings, Sihon K*
and Og King: for his mercie endureth for ever.
will God damne thee that art a drunkard: W
for his mercie endureth for ever. God will
found thee that art a worldling: Why? for
mercy endureth for ever. God will be reven
on thee that art a Luke-warmling: Why? fo
mercy endureth for ever. This may well
thee tear the haire of thy head, rather then
thee goe on in thy sinnes. See *Jerem.* 7. 29.
dicate on this.

The fourth ground: meditate on the consi

e of God. As the Lord was an enemy to wic-
d men, so he continues the same God still, a
nstant enemy to them still. As the Lord would
t endure sinne heretofore, so hee is con-
nt, hee still will not endure it. Did the Lord
nce say, *Weep and howle yee drunkards?* Ioel 1.
he is constant, so he saith still. Did the Lord
y, *he would burn up Sabbath-breakers?* Jer. 17.
7. he is constant, so he saith still. *Who ever har-
ned his heart against the Lord, and prospered?* Job
. 14. as if he should say, I put it to thee to me-
itate of it: canst thou shew me a precedent did
er any man harden his heart against Gods
Word, in his sin, that prospered? Did *Senache-
b* prosper in his will-worship? Did *Judas* pro-
per in his covetousnesse? Did *Jeconiah* prosper
his stubbornesse? Where is the Scribe? where
the receiver? where is he that counted the
owers? (saith the Prophet) *Your fathers where
re they*, saith *Zachary*? Did not my words take
old of them? and are they not all now in hell,
hat have ever lived and died in their sin, from
he beginning of the world? Thou canst not
hew me one drunkard, or one mocker, or one
rofane person, or one formall professor, from
heday that man was created upon the earth,
at is not now in hell, if he be dead. Meditate
n this, how canst thou expect to be the one
nely in all the world that shalt escape, if thou
lvest and diest in thy sins? If hell were opened,
nd the bottomlesse pit were lookt into, thou
houldst see every soul that ever lived, and died
n their sins, even every soul; there is not one
soul

soul missing. Meditate on this; when I die I think I shall not be there? nay I shall be there too, unlesse aforehand I enter into the strait gate, and walk in the narrow way of new obedient life.

Now follows the manner, how to fold Meditation home to the heart. Here are five things to be practised.

First, weigh and ponder all these things in thy heart. It's said of Mary, she pondered, Luke 2. 19. and kept all these sayings in her heart: v. 51. The words signifie two things: First, she compared these things together. Secondly, she laid them all in the scales together. Dost thou know God is merciful? ponder it with his justice. Dost thou know that Jesus Christ died for sinners? ponder it with the true drift of it; know that it is not to let men go on in their sins, but to save them from their sins. Dost thou obey God in this or that Commandment? O ponder it with thy life with the rest, *Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.* Prov. 4. 26. A man that eats his meat well, fourty more well, yet one crum going awry throtles him. Thou walkest in these and these Commandments, yea but there be other Commandments besides these: dost thou walk in them too? thou must, if thou meanest to have thy wayes to be established. The Jews had their *centners, talents, minas, sicles*, which were greater weights; so they had also their *gerahs*, and *agorahs*, small measures, and smallest of all: so have we greater and lesse weights; great ones, to ponder

the great Commandments, and leſſe to weigh even the leaſt of Gods Commandments: and ſee thou make true Evangelicall weight, or elſe all will not be well. Suppoſe a man were to pay a 100 pound of good and lawfull money, and in weight, upon forfeiture of all that he hath, if he weigh it not; but the creditor doth, and find it light; he is undone. If thou pondereſt not thy wayes, *God* will *ponder* them: *Prov.* 5. 21. the word ſignifies, he weighs, and ponders them in a ballance, or ſcales; he puts the Word of his Goſpel in the one, and thy goings and obedience in the other. *Thou art weighed, and art found light, thy kingdom is departed from thee*: ſaith God to *Belſhazzar*, *Dan.* 5. 27. So if thou be light, thou ſhall be weighed, and ſo found, thou ſhalt loſe the kingdom of heaven for ever.

Secondly, ſtrip ſin, and look upon it ſtarke naked: ſin covers and diſguiſeth it ſelf, with pleaſure, profit, eaſe, and many a whoriſh garment, and ſo inticeth the heart. Even a toad, if ſhe were covered over with gold, thoſe that ſaw onely the gold, would pocket it up; if it were naked, they would fling it in the kennell. Why do men love covetouſneſſe? why, its hooded with profit. Why carding, dicing, hunting, hawking, tabring, piping, and more then the word alloweth? why? they are cloathed with pleaſure, and delight. Its the duty of Miniſters to unmaſk and uncaſe ſin, and pluck off the vail that covers it from appearing unto men. The not doing of this is the cauſe, that men do not

meditate on the vileneſſe of their ſins, never are humbled, never eſcape Gods wrath; even becauſe they do not *diſcover mens iniquities. Lam.* 2. 14. Alas, the profit of thy ſins ſhall ceaſe, the pleaſure ceaſe, the eaſe ceaſe, and all theſe goodly ſuits ſhall vaniſh away, when the ſoul comes to die, or to ſtand before the judgement ſeat of Chriſt: ſin will remain, but thy ſilver, and thy gold, where will that be then? thy laughter, and thy merriment, what will become of that then? thy delight will be gone. Meditate therefore with thy ſelf, my ſin is now gainfull, and eaſie, and pleaſant; but what will my ſin become, when I come to lie on my death-bed? what good will it do me, when I have moſt need of ſuccour? I will never acknowledge him my friend that will turn againſt me, when I have moſt need of him. Alas, I muſt die, I muſt come to judgement, I muſt go either to heaven, or to hell: the profit that I get now by my ſins, will it beſtead me then? the pleaſure, the eaſe that I now find in ſin, will it help me there? Alas no, it will then be my break-neck, it will be a devill unto me: the more I have been delighted with it, the more it will gall me: the more I have gotten by it, the more it will damne me: the ſin which I moſt of all loved, will moſt of all torment me. *Eccleſiaſt.* 11. 9. look thus upon ſin.

The third means: dive into thine own ſoul and heart, there is a tough brawn over thy heart, that it feels not its ſins. Now Meditation muſt look through, and come to the heart at the quick,

quick, and cauſe the truth to dive into the deep places of the ſoul. When the timber is hard, the workman cannot thruſt in the nail with the weight of his hand: no, he muſt hammer it in, Meditation is the hammering of the heart. It's a pertinent phraſe, *Jer.* 23. 24. *Is not my word like a fire*, (ſaith the Lord) *and like a hammer that breaketh the rocks in pieces*? There be two ſimilitudes, firſt, of a *hammer*: the Word of God is the hammer; meditation is the hand that taketh this hammer, and knocks the nail into the rocky heart, and makes it enter: Wilt thou not feele? Ile make thee feel: (ſaith Meditation) wilt thou not take notice of thy wretched eſtate? Meditation comes with blowe after blowe, & makes it take notice. Secondly, of *fire*; the word is like fire; Meditation kindles it about the heart. A man ben ummed with cold is ſenſeleſſe; the water frozen with cold, though the leaſt peble would have ſunk in it before, now a great milſtone is able to lie upon it, and not ſink; the water is able to bear it: ſo is the heart, be it ſins never ſo heavie, as the hill of Baſan, yet it bears it and feels no weight: but Meditation thawes the heart, and then every ſin pincheth and oppreſſeth. *Is not my word like fire*? as if he ſhould ſay, think of it, and muſe of it, and meditate of it, and thou ſhalt feel it as a fire. Meditation is the often ſmiting of the heart with this hammer: ſo did *Ephraim, ſmite upon his thigh*: Jer. 31. 19. like a man in a miſerable agony, he thumps his own breaſt, and in a vexation ſtrikes his hand

on his thigh. Oh miserable wretch that I am! So did *Ephraim*. Oh what an unruly ox am I! how unwilling am I to bear the *yoke* of the Lord? Oh and oh the hardnesse of my heart! oh that I could tell how to beat thee black and blue! Many men smite their hearts, but they smite them not often enough. When *Elisha* bad *Joash* smite upon the ground, *he smote thrice and stayed*. The man of God said to him in anger, *Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times, for then thou hadst smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed them; whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice*. 2 Kin. 13. 19. So men smite their hearts twice or thrice or so, but they will not smite their sins dead: it may be they break the head of their sins, but they recover again, and grow strong upon them, as at first. Thou must smite five or six times, yea fifty times five times, till thou hast quite broken the impostume of thy heart. Meditate on the mercies of God, and with them smite it often and often: meditate on the justice of God, and with it smite it again, and again: Meditate on the wrath of God, which is as a consuming fire, and with it smite it soundly. Meditate on the truth of the Lord, this threatning and that threatning; this commandment, and that commandment; this promise, and that promise, and with all these smite it to powder.

The fourth manner; Anticipate and prevent thine owne heart: meditate what thy heart will one day wish, if it be not humbled, and tell thy soule as much; thou wilt one day wish, Oh that

I

I had been humbled under the reproofes of the Lord! Oh that I had been wiſe to have underſtood mine owne mercie! Curſed bee the day that ever I neglected the means of grace; ſo the Lord brings in a fooliſh obſtinate ſinner, curſing and banning his own ſoule, ſobbing and howling at the laſt. *Oh how have I hated inſtruction, and my heart deſpiſed reproofe! and have not obſerved the voyce of my Teachers, nor inclined mine eare to them that inſtructed mee?* Pro. 5. 12, 13. I had Miniſters to preach to me, but I would not come at them: or if I did, I cared not for their doctrine: I had friends that adviſed me wel, but woe is me damned wretch! I heeded them not. Thus thou wilt caſt the foole into thine owne teeth, and fling a thouſand curſes into thine own face, becauſe of thy madneſſe. I might have learned, but I would not; I might have been humbled, but I would not: *I was almoſt in all evill in the midſt of the aſſembly of the congregation*, verſ. 14. I lived where the Saints of God were in whole aſſemblies, but I mockt them, I hated them, I miſliked them for being too preciſe. I was not aſhamed of my ſecurity, no not in thy ſight. Thus thou wilt cry out one day, if now thou wilt not yeeld unto meditation, which muſt make this as preſent with thee. Know thou, O my ſoul, the time of thy viſitation is at hand, thou wilt curſe thy ſelfe hereafter, if thou doeſt not now be moved by Gods mercies, thou ſhalt never ſee mercie more: Now be awaked by Gods judgments, or elſe thou ſhalt feel them for evermore: now,

or for ever thou ſhalt roare for them. Then thou ſhalt curſe thy gains and thy profits that bewitched thee, thou ſhalt curſe thy pleaſures and delights that beſotted thee; curſe thine own heart, and thine own ſoul, and thine own conſcience that have damned thee. Meditation may tell thee, thus it will be with thee, unleſſe thou obeyeſt now. *Hear ye me now, oh ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.* ver. 7. hear the word now, and obey it, let it not depart out of thy meditation. Now be humbled with grace, or then thou ſhalt be humbled with horrour: then thou ſhalt wiſh, Oh that I had been ruled! When thou art in hell, then thou ſhalt meditate, Oh it was good counſell that ſuch and ſuch a Miniſter gave me; good counſell that ſuch a friend, and ſuch a brother gave me; but wretch that I was, I had not grace to follow it! I had more mind of my pleaſures, more mind of my vanities then of grace. Oh if it were to do again, I would not do ſo for a thouſand worlds: but alas, it is now too late. Therefore let Meditation preſſe this upon thee before-hand.

3. Now follows the third thing, how to put life to Meditation. Foure duties are to be done to this purpoſe.

1 Let Meditation haunt thy heart, let meditation dogge thee with the helliſh looks of thy ſins, and follow it with the dreadfull vengeance of God, haunt it with promiſes, haunt it with threatnings, haunt it with mercies, and haunt it with judgements, and haunt it with Commandments.

mandments. The heart is like the Beaver, when it perceiveth it cannot possibly escape from the Huntsman, it cuts the member for which it is hunted, and flings it down, and so escapes (saith *Æsop:*) So pursue thy heart with its sins, with the hue and cry of Gods mercies; pursue it with the hubbub of Gods judgments; let meditation haunt it, and let thy soule see it shall never be rid of the haunt; at last it will bee content to part with its lusts. Let meditation say, wilt thou forsake thine own mercies? If thou livest thus and thus, if thou prayest thus and thus, dead-heartedly, thou kickest against thine own mercie, wilt thou rush upon the pricks? This mercie thou maist have, if thou wouldst amend; that vengeance thou shalt have, if thou doe not amend: Either cut off thy sinnes, or else God will cut off thy soul. *Return, O Shulamite, return, return,* its the voyce of Christ to thee: Let meditation say, Returne, O my soule, returne, returne, and thou mayst be saved; returne, or else thou shalt bee condemned. Now what was the effect of this haunting meditation? *Or ere I was aware, my soule made me like the Chariots of Aminadab, vers.* 12. That is, my soule musing and meditating on these and these commandments, it so humbled my soul, that it made me yeeld; yea, and made me run as fast as the Chariots of *Aminadab, freely* and *willingly* to Christ. Cant. 6. 13

Deal with thy heart as *Junius* his father dealt with him: he seeing his sonne was Atheistically, he laid a Bible in every room, that his son could

look in no room, but behold a Bible haunte him, upbraiding him, wilt thou not read me, A theiſt? wilt thou not read me? And ſo at la he read it, & was converted from his Atheiſme So let meditation haunt thy heart, hold forth th commandments, promiſes, threatnings of th Lord, that thy heart may ſee them; let meditat on haunt thee in thy luke-warmneſſe: pray thou thus luke-warme? This prayer will brea thy neck one day. Repenteſt thou? This luke warm repentance will cauſe God to ſpue the out of his mouth. Heareſt thou, ſpeakeſt thou thinkeſt thou? Theſe luke-warme duties wi confound thee ere long, if thou lookeſt no to it.

Let meditation haunt thee, as they haunte *Nehemiah* with warnings, *ten times* (ſaith th Text) they ſent to *Nehemiah*, *they will bee upo thee*, *Nehem.* 4. 12. Beware of the danger, the e nemy will be upon thee: ten times they war ned him, never giving over till *Nehemiah* loo ked about him, *verſ.* 13. So doe thou haunt thin owne heart: they will be upon thee, this curſe this wrath, that hardneſſe of heart, this ſecur will be upon thee. Ten times, yea a thouſan times ten times, never give over thine own ſoul untill thou haſt made it to ſubmit. Indeed there be ſome, let God ſend meditations to haun them, and follow them, ſaying, repent, leave thi or that ſinne, why wilt thou be damn'd with thi ſin? Oh forſake it, preſently they will gagg the mouth of meditation, and of conſcience, an

ſtrike

ſtrike them ſtark dead: as *Abner* when *Azahel* would haunt him, and follow him, and turn neither to the right hand, nor to the left, but follow him at the heels. *Turn aſide* (ſaith *Abner*) but he would not turne aſide from following him. Turn aſide from me (ſayes *Abner* again) or I will kill thee, but he would not turne aſide, he would follow him cloſe: Then he up with his Speare and ſlew him, 2 *Sam.* 2.19,20,21,22,23. So many deale with the meditation of conſcience, when conſcience would dogge them, and weary them out of their ſins, they will not: when conſcience would haunt them, they will not be haunted therewith; when conſcience would follow them up with their deſperate wiltulneſſe, they gall, and wound, and murder conſcience to be quiet. But *David* haunted his heart, and would have it haunted.

The ſecond duty: let Meditation trace thy heart, as it ſhould haunt thee, ſo alſo let it trace thee in the ſame ſteps. So would the Church, *Let us ſearch and trie our wayes, and turn again unto the Lord*: Lam. 3.40. The word (in the originall, ſayes *Buxtorf*) ſignifies, *track our ſteps, ſtep by ſtep*: this ſtep was in the ditch, that in the mire, that ſtep awry: track them all, that we may ungo them all again, and turn unto the Lord. Never pray, but let meditation track thy prayer: this paſſage was right, that paſſage was amiſſe. Never keep a Sabbath, but let meditation track thy keeping of it; this duty was ſincere, that was rotten: Never do any thing, but let Meditation track

track it. This thought, this word, this action, was warrantable; that was out of the way: track thy heart, as the Lord tracted *Eliah*, he tract him in the wilderneſſe, he tracted him under the juniper tree, he tract him in the cave; *What doſt thou here Eliah? go forth:* 1 King. 19. *What doſt thou here Eliah? go, return.* He tract him in the mount, *Go, return, what doſt thou here Eliah?* this is not a place for thee. So let Meditation wait thee: what doſt thou here, O ſinner? what doſt thou here, O drunkard? in thy covetouſneſſe, or in thy prophaneneſſe, what doſt thou here? this is not a place for thee, unleſſe thou mean to periſh. It may be thou art now ſcared out of theſe ſinnes, and art run into civill honeſty; let Meditation ſtill tract thee. What doſt thou do here, oh ſinner? civilitie is not a caſe fit for thee, unleſſe thou wert better, thou ſhalt be torn in peeces. It may be thou art driven out of thy civility, and art gone further, to the profeſſion of Religion, though it be without the power of it: let meditation ſtill wait thee. What doſt thou here, O ſinner? this ſorrie kind of profeſſion is not a paſſe fit for thee: unleſſe thou be godlier then ſo, thou ſhalt be devoured with everlaſting fire.

Meditation is like the courſing of a hare in the ſnow; the hare fearing to be taken by the dogs, here ſhe ſtops, there ſhe leaps, here ſhe interleaps, there ſhe goes backward, and forward, upward and downward, and all to deceive the dogs, that they may not find her; but they go ſmelling and maundring, winding and turning,

and

and track her ſtep by ſtep, til thy find her: ſo Meditation in the courſing of the ſoul, the heart hath a thouſand fetches, a thouſand meanders and labyrinths, a thouſand croſſe windings, and compaſſings, and deceits, and all to puzle Meditation. But Meditation muſt track the heart, as God dealt with *Job*, *be counted his ſteps*, ſtep by ſtep: *Job* 14. 16. Meditation is the ſouls blood-hound, it will never leave howling, the wrath of God, till it hath taken the hearts ſin for a prey; Meditation haunts it out of one ſin, and it runs into another; Meditation haunts it out of that, & it runs into a third: Meditation is a good purſevant, it proſecutes the ſinner, & attaches him

Now becauſe the heart is moſt cunning, and hardeſt to be tracked by its ſent, when the heart hath taken up abundance of good duties, and attained unto ſundrie graces, theſe good duties and common graces drown the ſent of the hearts wickedneſſe. As Huntſmen obſerve, that the hounds cannot well hunt in the Spring, as *Theophraſtus*, and *Pollux*, and others obſerve: the ſweet odors of the flowers and herbes (ſayes *Oppian*) hinder the hounds from ſmelling the hare: ſo it is with Meditation; it is hard for it to track the heart in the green Spring time of civill honeſtie and formalitie. And therefore let Meditation make diligent ſearch, ſaith he. Pſal. 77. 16

The third duty: hale thy heart before God, and let Meditation bring it before his throne, and there powre out thy complaint againſt it before God, there out with all thy villany, and article

ticle against thy self, and bring as many com-
plaints against thy self before heaven, as the
be drops in a bucket full of water. So do th
godly: *I powred out all my complaints before him*
(Psal. 102. in the preface) I powred out m
complaints, as a man powreth out water out o
a vessell; generally men are willing to call fo
mercie, but they are not so willing to bring com-
plaints unto God against themselves: ye shal
have them whisper after the Minister, as he
begging for pardon and mercie, but they wi
not do so, whiles he is complaining of thei
sins; the hellish and devillish abominations o
their heart. These are men of corrupt mind
reprobate concerning the faith, and shall neve
have mercy, till they be as forward to com-
plain of their sins, as to be plaintives for mercy.

When a man in meditation meets with a
hard matter, that he cannot sufficiently dive in-
to, he breaks it to another: so do thou to God,
break all thy heart to God, tell him of thy hard-
nesse of heart, of the pride of thy heart, of the
desperate prophaneneſſe of thy heart; but take
these rules with thee.

Oh! I could but sorrow for my sins as I ought.

First, thy complaint must be *full of sorrow*: Psal.
55.

Secondly, it must be a *full complaint*, of *all* thy
sins, and of *all* thy lusts; *Lam.* 2. 18. 19. *Poure out*
thy heart like water before the face of the Lord. Wa-
ter runs all out of a vessell when you turn the
mouth downward; never a spoonfull will stay
behind. The wicked will not complain of their
sins,

ſins, *fully*: they make hypocriticall profeſſions. If it be a ſin, I am ſorrie for it; (ſaies one) if it be naught, I cry God mercie; (ſaith another) when their own conſciences tell them it is a ſinne, yet they will not complain of it abſolutely.

Thirdly, thy complaint muſt be with aggravation: thou muſt aggravate thy ſins by all the circumſtances, that may ſhew it to be odious, as *Peter* did: *when he thought thereon, he wept*: Mark 14.72. the originall hath it, *he caſt all theſe things one upon another*. Wretch that I was, Chriſt was my maſter, and yet I denied him; ſuch a good maſter, that he called me before any of my fellow Apoſtles, and yet I denyed him; I was readie to ſink once, he denyed not me: I was to be damned once, he denyed not my ſoul, and yet I denied him; he told me of this ſin beforehand, that I might take heed of it, and yet I denyed him. I ſaid I will not commit it, nor forſake him, and yet I denyed him: yea this very night, no longer ago, did I ſay and ſay again, I would not deny him, and yet I denyed him: yea I ſaid, though all others denyed him, yet would not I; and yet worſe then all others, I denyed him with a witneſſe, before a maid, before a damoſel; nay more filthy beaſt that I am, I ſaid I did not know the man; nay more, I ſware I did not know him; nay more then all this, I did even curſe my ſelf with an oath that I did not know him: nay more, all this evill did I, not above five or ſix ſtrides from my Lord and Saviour: nay more, even then, when if ever I would have ſtood for him, I ſhould

should have done it then, when all the world di
forsake him. Oh wretch that I was, I denie
him! he cast up all these circumstances togeth
and meditating on them, *he went out, and we*
bitterly.

4. Fourthly, thy complaint must be a selfe-co
demning complaint: thou must condemne t
selfe, and lay thy selfe at hell gates, and set t
naked point of Gods vengeance at thy thro
Thus and thus have I lived, damned cast-aw
as I have deserved to be! So did *Ezra* in t
behalfe of the Jewes, *Ezra* 9.

For, 1. He *fell on his face*, he did not bo
down on his knees, but like a man astonished, h
fell on his knees, ready to reele on the grou
in amazement.

2. He *spread out his hands unto the Lord, verse*
as if he should say, here is my heart-blood, Lor
here is my breast, Lord, we deserve thou shoul
stab us with thy wrath.

3. He *blushes* to look heaven in the face, *ver*
6. so vexed to think on the sinnes of his peopl
that he is even confounded to begge mercy.

4. He is (as it were) dumb and speechle
before God: *And now our God, what shall we s*
after all this? for we have forsaken thy command
ments, verse 10. Shall I excuse the matter? ala
it is inexcusable. *What shall we say after all this*
Shall we call for thy patience? We had it, an
yet were little the better. Shall we call for mer
cie? Why, we had it, and yet our stubborn
hearts would not come downe. I know no
wha

what to ſay for our ſelves: for we have ſinned againſt thee.

5. He declares Gods truth, that he had *warned them by his Prophets*, (*verſ.* 11. 12.) but no warning can better us.

6. He ſhewes how God had *puniſhed them*, yet they would not be humbled: for all that God had brought upon them *leſſe evils then they deſerved*, and wrought *deliverances* for them, which they could not have expected; *What ſhall we ſay, ſhould we for all this break thy commandements?* *verſe* 13. 14. What can we expect but hell and confuſion?

7. He is ſenſible of Gods judgements and righteouſneſſe: *O Lord, thou art righteous*: as if he ſhould ſay, How canſt thou ſpare us for this ſinne? How can it ſtand with thy righteouſnes? How is it that ſuch hel-hounds as we are, ſhould live above ground, when thou art ſo righteous a God? It is a wonder that the earth opens not her mouth for to ſwallow us up quick: for, *O Lord, thou art righteous.*

8. He layes down his ſoule, and all the peoples ſoules at Gods feet; as if he ſhould ſay; here we be, thou maiſt damne us if thou wilt; *Behold, we are all here before thee in our treſpaſſes: for wee cannot ſtand before thee, becauſe of this, ver.* 15. Behold here we are: rebels we are: here are our heads and our throats before thee, if now thou ſhouldſt take us from our knees unto hel, & from our prayers unto damnation, we cannot ask thee why thou doeſt ſo: Oh it's mercie, it's mercie

cie indeed, that we have been spared. Thus me-
ditation must bring our hearts before God
and there complaine against them before hea-
ven.

Meditation should deale with the heart, as the
Father did with his possessed child, who carried
him to Christ; saying, *Master, my child is possessed*
with a Devil, even *a dumb spirit, and I spake to thy*
Disciples that they should cast him out, but they could
not, Mark 9. 18. *Bring him to me* (saith Christ)
vers. 19. *How long is this agoe since this came to*
him? Of a child (saith the Father) *and often it*
hath cast him into the fire, and often into the water to
destroy him; but if thou canst doe any thing (as cer-
tainly thou canst doe all things) *have compassion*
on us, and help us, verse 22. And then Christ helps
him: So let meditation drive thy heart to God
saying, Lord here is my heart (I beleeve) possessed
with a Devill; for it is a most abominable sin-
ful heart: I brought my heart to thy Ministers to
cure it, to Sermons, to prayer, to all other good
duties, but they could not help me: my heart is
a Devillish heart, still my heart is wicked, and
rebellious still: the Devill, oh! the Devill is in it
still! Oh, how he tempts me! he holds me, he
casts me into the fire of this lust, and into the
water of ever-flowing iniquity. Have thou
compassion, come and helpe me; for my heart is
miserably vexed with Satan; when I pray, the
Devill stuffes me with dead thoughts, and drow-
sie desires, the Devill fills me with wandring i-
maginations, and I know not what; when I hear

the Word, the Devil makes me to riſe up againſt it, or forget it, or not obey it; when the Sabbath is come, the Devill ſets me on thinking my own thoughts, and ſpeaking mine own words; when the Sacrament is come, the Devill hinders me in ſelfe examination, the Devill diſappoints me of my preparation: Oh have thou compaſſion on me.

The fourth duty; let meditation, when it hath held thy heart before God, there caſt thee down before him: when meditation hath ſearched out thy caſe, and made it appeare how wofull it is, then let it lay thee along before God, with *What ſhall I doe to be ſaved?* So it did with them in *Acts* 2.27. as if they ſhould ſay (ſaith *Chryſoſtome*) We have not one jot of hope to finde mercie, ſo long as we live as we do. What ſhall we do? Say what thou wilt, our ears are ready to hear it; command what thou wilt, our ſouls, what ever it be, are willing to doe it: bid us ſuffer what ever thou pleaſeſt, tell us what it is, and we will endure it. They did not ſay, (notes *Chryſoſtome*) *How ſhall we be ſaved*, as wicked men doe: they deſire to be ſaved, but their maine care is not to ſee *what* they muſt doe, they are told what they muſt doe, and yet refuſe to doe it; but thy chiefe ſtudy muſt be, to caſt thy ſelfe down before God, with the good Jaylor, *Sirs, what ſhall I doe to be ſaved? Acts* 16.30. Firſt, *what muſt I doe?* and then *to be ſaved.* Firſt, thy care muſt be what to doe to get out of thy ſins, how to be rid of thy luſts, and then to be ſaved;

as if he should say, I see I am at a damned passe, and therefore I was a making away my selfe, the fire of hell did slay my soule: but now is there hope of salvation? is there indeed? Oh tell me, I am willing to do any thing, what must I doe? Keep nothing back of all the will the Lord; be it punishments to suffer, tell me of it, I am ready to beare it; be it precepts for to doe, though never so irksome, O let me know it, and I will not refuse it. *What must I doe to be saved?* When the heart is thus humbled upon sound meditation, it's willing to do or suffer any thing. *Jonah* is willing to be cast into the sea, being humbled, *Jonah* 1.2. *Here I am, Lord, deal with me as thou wilt.*

Motive 1. The first Motive. Is it a folly not to meditate? Should a man walk on in a course, and not meditate whither it will tend? When he falls into mischiefe, what will he say? I never thought of this before, I never considered that this would be the end. Now it is the part of a fool to say, *I never thought*, as the Latin proverb hath it; when the Steed is stollen, if he should then shut the Stable doore, what wouldst thou say? He should have thought of that before. The rich man in the Gospel had these meditations in his heart; he thought within himselfe, What shall I do, because I have no roome where to bestow my fruits? He said in his heart, This will I do, I will pull down my barnes and build greater; and will say to my soule, *Soule, soule, thou hast much goods laid up for many yeares, eate, drinke, and*

be merry; *Luke* 12.17,18,19,20. *Thou fool* (ſaid God) *this night ſhall thy ſoule bee required of thee*; *then*, *whoſe ſhall theſe things bee that thou haſt provided?* God ſaid thus unto him; not as if God ſpake thus familiarly unto him (ſaith *Theophylact*) but it is a parable, and God ſayes ſo in his word, *Thou foole, this night ſhall they require thy ſoule of thee.* In this night of thy blindneſſe, in this night of thy ſecurity, ſhall they require it: hee doth not ſay, *I* will require thy ſoule of thee, but *they*: hee doth not ſay who, but they, the Devils in hell, God knowes who ſhall come, thou ſhalt die, and they ſhall fetch away thy ſoule to hell: *they* ſhall *require* it. A godly mans ſoule is not required, but rather he requires God to take away his ſoule; he is willing to die, that he may be with Chriſt: but a wicked mans ſoule is required of him: hee would willingly not die, but that his ſoul is required of him, and he muſt die. Doubtleſſe the rich foole now thought with himſelfe, I never thought that I ſhould have died ſo ſoone, and therefore now he falls (it may be) to his *Lord*, *Lord*, and cries God mercie. But what will they ſay to him? Thou ſhouldſt have thought of this before.

The wiſe man ſhall inherit glory, but ſhame ſhall be the promotion of fooles, *Prov.* 3. 35. The wiſe and prudent, thoſe that truly meditate of things before hand, ſhall have glory; but fools that hope to be promoted to glory and ſalvation, ſhame and confuſion of face ſhall be all their promotion: and when they come thereto, beſides their

expectation; what will they say? We never thought it would be thus with us before; but fooles as we were, we thought to bee promoted to heaven: like *Haman*, when King *Ahashuerus* said unto him, What shall be done to the man whom the King will honour? O thus and thus (saith *Haman*) for hee thought, I am the man whom the King intendeth to honour, *Esther* 6. 6. but when *Haman* was presently after to be hanged on a gallowes, he might rightly say, I never thought of this before. So what shall be done to the man whom the Lord will honour? Thus and thus sayest thou, he shall have mercies, blessings, heaven: I, for thou thinkest, I am the man that God intendeth thus to honour; but when thou art come to hell, what will thou say then? I never thought of this before, that so it would be.

Mot. 2. The second motive is, Thou wouldst be loath to have the brand of a reprobate: Not to meditate, is that brand; *The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God; neither is God in all his thoughts*, *Psal.* 10. 4. He scornes to be so poring upon Bibles, to be so wracking his mind with his sinnes; *Hee hath said in his heart, God will not require it*, *vers.* 13. God requires no such scrupulositie nor strictnesse.

Mot. 3. The third motive is, Thou wouldst be loath to rob God of his honour, and the main part of his service, which is Meditation. *Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, and with all thy soule*, *Matth.* 22. 38. How can this bee true of

them

them (ſaith *Chryſoſtom*) who become *vain in their imaginations?* Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, ſoule, and mind: And ſo do I (ſayſt thou:) So doſt thou? What, and not love God with all that is in thy heart? Thy thoughts are in thy heart, thy meditations are in thy mind; If thy thoughts then, and meditations be not of God, thou doſt not love God with all thy heart. *David* did not only pray, that *the words of his mouth*, but alſo that *the thoughts of his heart* ſhould be ever *acceptable to the Lord*, *Pſal.* 19.14. not only that he might be full of heavenly communication in his mouth, but alſo of holy meditation in his heart, *Behold* (ſaith he) *thou requireſt truth in the inward parts*, *Pſal.* 51.6. And meditation is one of the duties of truth in the inward parts.

The fourth Motive: Thou wouldſt be loath that all the worſhip thou giveſt to God, ſhou'd be abominable: ſo it will be without meditation; meditation before it, meditation after it. *Mot.* 4.

Firſt, thou muſt meditate before thou goeſt about a duty of Gods worſhip: conſider before thou hear the word of God, meditate what thou art going about, *Hearken, O daughter, and conſider, incline thine eare*, *Pſal.* 45.10. Firſt, *conſider and meditate*, and then, *incline thine eare*. This is part of thoſe words often in Scripture, *Be ready, be ready; Be ready and come up* (ſaith God Exo.34.2) *Be ready againſt the third day*, Exo.19. *Gather your ſelves together*, *Zeph.*2.1. that is, *prepare to meet thy God, O Iſrael*, *Amos* 4.12.

Secondly, meditate after the duty. When men part with men, they use to give one another a farewell, and not bluntly deliver their mind one to another, and so turn their backs one upon another. *Lysias* could not write a letter to *Felix*, and break up abruptly, but he gave him a *farewell*, *Acts* 23.30. Neither may a man when a duty is done, goe away bluntly from God, but give him a farewell by holy meditation. It's an unseemly kicking of a duty, as most men do, when they are come to the end of their prayers, *to whom with the Father and holy Spirit, be ascribed all praise and glory, Amen*; Come, is dinner ready? or, what news do you hear? This is unmannerlinesse toward the ordinances of God. A man that hath been at a good dinner, will sit a while after it, or walke a while; he will not presently run to his worke, that the meat may digest the better: So when thou hast been at Gods dainties, sit after it a while, pawsing and meditating thereof, as often as thou well mayest, let it have its working a while.

What is the reason thou hast so many by-thoughts in prayer? Because thou dost not meditate before-hand and after. Hence it is that thine eyes are not directed to the duty, but like a blind Archer thou shootest but by aim; when the good Archer shoots, he must have the white in his eye still, which he must levell at. *My voyce shalt thou heare betimes in the morning, in the morning will I direct my prayer to thee, and will look up*, *Ps.* 5.3. How came that? you may look on his meditations,

ditations, verſ. 1. By meditation he was wont to direct and levell his prayer to God. Wicked men know that God is before them, as a blinde man may learn that the But is before him; but they ſee not God before them to direct their prayers unto him: they pray at rovers. Thou muſt uſe then to meditate of God, that thy prayers may bee directed: if thou prayeſt not thus, thy prayers are like them in the Prophet, who *drew neer to God with their lippes, but their hearts were far from him*, like an arrow beſide the But, or far off from the mark, either wide or ſhort. *They have not cried unto me with their hearts, when they howled upon their beds*, *Hoſea* 7. 14. They prayed, but they prayed not to me; (ſaith the Lord) as the White may ſay of a bungling Archer, hee ſhoots, but not at me: when he ſhooted, hee ſhot another way. God counts all ſuch prayers no better then *howling of Dragons and wild beaſts*; (ſo the word ſignifies ſaith *Scindler*) God would as lief (and rather too) that a Dog, or a Wolfe, or Dragon ſhould howl in his hearing, then hear ſuch a prayer as this is. The onely way therefore to performe duties of Gods worſhip purely, is chiefly meditation, meditation, meditation.

THE DANGER OF DEFERRING Repentance,

DISCOVERED

In a Sermon preached at Maidſtone in Kent September 25. 1629.

By that reverend and faithfull Miniſter of the Word,

WILLIAM FENNER, B. D.
Sometimes fellow of *Pembroke Hall* in *Cambridge*, and late Parſon of *Rochford* in *Eſſex*.

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A SERMON OF

Mr. WILLIAM FENNERS at *Maidſtone*. Septem. 25. 1629.

PROV. 1. 28.

Then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer: they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me.

THere is a good Engliſh Proverbe amongſt us, that *he that neglects the occaſion, the occaſion will neglect him. Solomon* wiſely begins his Proverbs with it: for he bringeth in the Wiſdom of his Father in theſe five particulars: firſt, making a generall Proclamation in the 20 verſe, *Wiſdome crieth without, ſhe uttereth her voyce in the ſtreets.* He compareth God unto a cryer that goeth up and down the City from ſtreet to ſtreet, and from doore to doore, crying his commodity, even the richeſt that ever was, which is a Chriſt, a

1.

a Christ for redemption, a Christ for sanctifica-
tion, a Christ to enlighten those that walk
darknesse, and in the shadow of death. *Ho, ev-
one that thirsteth*, here is a *Christ* for you.

2. Secondly, here is a mercifull reprehension,
the 22. verse, *O ye foolish, how long will ye love fo-
lishnesse, and ye scorners take pleasure in scorni-
Foolish indeed to be without Christ: foolish
be without grace, foolish to chafer away o
souls for sin. How long ye scorners will ye take pl
sure in scorning?* will you still persist in your wi
kednesse, and never have done with your sin
will you never turn back again, but damne yo
souls for ever? *O ye foolish, how long will you lo
foolishnesse?*

3. Thirdly, here is a gracious exhortation in t
23 verse: *Turn you at my correction: lo, I will po
out my mind unto you, and make you to underst
my words.* As if he should say, Do you not
how you are going apace to confusion; and th
the way you take, leadeth unto destructio
turn ye therefore, turn ye back again, for th
is a Christ behind you: O turn ye, for if ye go
in your sins, you perish for ever.

4. Fourthly, here is a yearning promise made
to the world, in the end of the 23 verse; *Lo,
will poure out my spirit upon you, and cause you
understand my words.* As if he should say, ret
back again with me, and you shall have be
welcome then you can possibly have, if you
on in your sins: the devill wil never let you g
so much by your living in your lusts, as you sh

do by repentance for them, and forſaking of them. For *behold, I will poure out my ſpirit upon you*, whereby you ſhall be far greater gainers, then you ſhall be by your ſins.

Fifthly, here is a grievous threatning againſt the world; even all thoſe that have loytered out the day of grace. As time and tyde ſtayes for no man, no more doth the day of grace: *Becauſe I have called, and you refuſed; I have exhorted, but you have not regarded.* I have denounced judgements againſt you for your ſins, but you have hardned your hearts; now a day of wo and miſerie ſhall come upon you, a time of vengeance and deſolation ſhall overtake you; there will a day come wherein there will be weeping, and crying Mercie (Lord) mercy; but I tell you beforehand what you ſhall truſt to: let this be your leſſon, now I call, and you will not hear; now I ſtretch out my hands, but you will not regard: *you ſhall ſeek me early, but you ſhall not find me: and ſhall cry, but you ſhall not be heard.* The words are a thunderclap againſt all thoſe that procraſtinate their repentance, and returning home unto God. Wherein note firſt, the parties themſelves that do prolong this time of grace, *they*: that is, they who when God cals on them, will not heare, when God invites them by his mercies, patience, and forbearance, by his Miniſters and ſervants, by his corrections and judgements, by all faire meanes and foule meanes, yet withſtand the means of grace: *they* are the men, *they* ſhall call, but God will not anſwer. 5.

Secondly,

2. Secondly, here is their ſeeking after God: they ſhall *call upon me.*

3. Thirdly, here is their earneſt and diligent ſeeking unto God, they ſhall not onely *call*, but ſ... to, and not onely ſeek, but ſeek as to labour to find: nay they ſhall ſeek me *early*, even ſtr... to go about it with all haſte, and flie to repen... tance, *but they ſhall not find me.*

4. Fourthly, here is the unſeaſonableneſſe of the time of their ſeeking, *then*: that is a demonſtrative, *then*; even a time which the Lord points at, as if he ſhould ſay, you ſhall ſee then theſe men will be of another mind, *then* they will be glad to be converted, *then* they will be glad to come out of their ſins, *then* they will be glad to get grace, and ſeeke reconciliation with God: but alas! they ſaw not this *then*, but God foreſaw it well enough; *then ſhall they call, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me.*

5. Laſtly, here is the fruſtration of their hope, which hath two things in it. Firſt, in regard of their ſelves, in regard of the flaw of their ſeeking, it being not aright. Secondly, in regard of the juſtice of God, who rewards every man according to his works. *But I will not hear them.* Whence obſerve this point of Doctrine.

Doct. 1. Thoſe that will not hear God when he calleth them; God will not hear them, when they call upon him. Thoſe that will not hear the Lord when he calleth upon them by the miniſtery of his Word, and voice of his Spirit, the Lord will

not heare them, when in their miſerie they call upon him.

Thus the Lord dealt with the people in *Ezekiels* dayes; the Lord called them to repentance and obedience: but when they ſtood out, and neglected the opportunity of grace, and ſeaſons of converſion, ſee how God deals with them: *though they cry in mine eares with a loud voyce, yet I will not hear them* (ſaith the Lord.) When men have gone beyond the time of Gods mercie, and out-rowed the tide of Gods forbearance, and will not return, the Lord ſets it down with himſelf, that his wrath ſhall return upon them, he will no longer forbear: they had a time wherein the Lord did pitie them, and offered grace and mercie unto them, but they neglecting this ſeaſon, and withſtanding this proffer of grace, God reſolves with himſelf they ſhall never have it again. There was a time wherein God did pitie them, but now he will not pitie them any more; twenty five yeers he called unto them, and ſought to bring them home; but becauſe they ſtood out and refuſed, the Lord ſaith, *I will love Ephraim no more.*

Beloved, there is a double day, a white day, and a black day; there is *a day of ſalvation*, *Iſa.* 49. 9. this is the day in the which the Lord ſaid to the priſoners, *Come forth*: and to thoſe that lie in their ſins, repent and beleeve. Now if any man will come forth and humble his ſoul before the Lord, let him come and welcome, for it is a day of ſalvation. But there is another day of damnation,

damnation, which is a dark day, a black and
duskie day, wherein the Lord will visit the
of the world, and revenge the quarrell of
Covenant. *Hos.* 9. 7. *The day of visitation is*
yea the day of recompence; the people shall know
the Prophet is a foole, and the spirituall man is
Beloved, we are fools, and all the spirituall
under heaven are mad, that lay not this day
heart. For the day of the Lord is a day of
tation, and all the world shall rue it, thou
now men sleep in security. If once mercy be
jected, and God turn away his eare from a
then grace shall be no more, the doore of
shall for ever be shut up against him: and
once this day comes, he hath lost his own
and deprived himself of eternall happine

Reas. 1. Now there are three Reasons of this
the first is the law of retaliation, of rend
like for like, which is the justest law that
be made with man, for to give unto every
according to his works, to make him take
as he brings, (as the heathen call it) to giv
man *quid* for *quo*. Now if God call upon
and thou wilt not hear; it is righteousnesse
God, yea equity with God (that is more)
when thou callest on him, he should not
thee. For thus runs the tenor of Gods
Prov. 28. 9. *He that turns away his eare from*
ing the Law, even his prayers shall be abomin
He that turns away his eare from Gods
God wil turn away his eare from his prayer
that *turns*, it is spoken in the present tense,

is, he that *now* turns away his eare, his prayer *ſhall be* abominable (in the future tenſe) that is, the Lord marks what maſter or ſervant, what father or mother, what husband or wife, what man or woman it is, that turns away the eare of his head, or the eare of his heart, from hearing his will, and obeying of his Commandments, the Lord takes ſpeciall notice of it, and ſets it down in his Calender, and records it in his Memoriall; keeping a ſtrict account therof: as if God ſhould ſay, Well, is it ſo? I now call, and will not this man or that woman anſwer? Do I now ſtretch out my hands, and will not they take care to obey me? Well, let them alone (ſaith God) there is a day coming, that I ſhall be a hearing of them, times of ſorrow and miſerie will take hold of them, and then they in their afflictions will cry unto me, but I will not hear; they will begge for mercy, but I will not regard: they will *ſeeke me early*, but they ſhall *not find me*.

It was one of the Articles of high Treaſon brought in againſt Cardinall *Woolſey*, that he had the pox, and a ſtinking breath, and yet durſt come into the Kings preſence: So it will be an article againſt thee of high treaſon before the King of heaven, if thou come into his preſence with the ſtinking breath of thy ſins, living in thy luſts, and wallowing in thy filthineſſe; all thy prayers are but as ſo many ſtinking breaths in the noſtrils of the Lord, and every duty that thou performeſt unto the Lord, ſhall be as ſo many articles of high treaſon againſt thee, for to condemne thee,

because thou liveſt in rebellion, and a traitour againſt God.

His prayer ſhall be abominable: he doth not ſay, I will turn away mine eare from hearing his prayer, which turns away his eare from hearing my Law, (that is the true expoſition of the words) no, like for like is ſometimes in-juſtice: for if a man ſhould ſtrike a Magiſtrate a box on the eare, it were not juſtice for him to give him another: for it is a greater ſin to ſtrike a Magiſtrate, then any other common perſon; and therefore a greater puniſhment the Law requireth: So God doth not ſay, he will turn away his eare from hearing his prayer, but will ſerve him in a worſe kind, he will count it abominable, yea abomination, (in the abſtract) it ſhall be loathſome, yea loathſomeneſſe it ſelf in the worſt manner. *Galat. 6. As a man ſoweth, ſo ſhall he reap: if thou ſowe ſparingly, thou ſhalt reap ſparingly*: if thou ſowe a dull eare to Gods Word, thou ſhalt reap a dull eare from God to thy prayer: for God will reward every man according to his works.

Reaſon 2. Secondly, becauſe of the time of Gods attributes; both mercy and juſtice have their ſeaſon in this life; and when mercie hath acted her part, then cometh juſtice upon the ſtage, and acteth her part: ſo that God will have his attributes manifeſted to all the ſons of men, yea to the face of the whole world. There is no market, nor Fayre day that laſteth alwayes: if the countrey will not come in, the Tradeſmen will put up

up their wares, and be gone: but if they come in time, they may have a peniworth: otherwiſe if they come too late, they will find none. For the Merchant will not alwayes dwell in tents, but away he goeth, and will not ſtay for them. Beloved, Gods ſtanding is now open, and his ſhop ſet wide unto the ſons of men; if men will not come in, cheapen and buy without money, whiles God offers his wares, he will put them up and be gone. For the Merchant will not loſe his wares, which he ſhould do, if he ſhould alwayes remain in the open ayre with them; if he alwayes continue in the fields expecting cuſtomers, his wares would ſpoyl and rot. So it is with God, how many ſweet counſels doth he loſe? how many ſweet exhortations? how many bleſſed Sermons, and holy Sacraments, and Sabbaths, doth he loſe? how many checks of conſcience? how many dayes of grace, and motions of his Spirit have been ſquandred away in vain? do you think that God will loſe all theſe, and let them rot upon the ſtall, with ſtaying for you? No, no: the day of grace and mercie will have an end, and grace and mercy will have an end; and then the day of wrath and vengeance will ſtep up. *To day if ye will hear his voyce, then harden not your hearts*: then they hardned their hearts, and would not be led by Gods mercies to forſake their ſins. *Therefore he ſware in his wrath that they ſhould never enter into his reſt.* If it be ſo with you as it was with Iſrael in the wilderneſſe, in the day of temptation, you do not

know but that his ſinnes may now begin to take vengeance upon you. I tell you, if you harden your hearts this day, you doe not know but this very day the Lord may clap an oath upon your heads, that you ſhall never enter into his reſt: For one and the ſelf-ſame occaſion laſts not always: as every day is not a Market day, nor every weeke in the yeare a Faire weeke, nor every ſeaſon in the yeare a time of Spring or harveſt; ſo every day of a mans life may not claim to be the day of grace. Therefore if a man fore-ſlow it, now he fore-ſloweth his own happineſſe, and putteth off his owne peace for ever.

Excellent is that annotation of *Gregory* on *Job* 27. 9. *Will God heare his cry when trouble commeth upon him?* Beloved, now Gods patience is troubled, wilt not thou repent? Now Gods Spirit is troubled, wilt not thou obey? Now Gods juſtice is troubled, wilt thou not relent? Now Gods word is troubled, wilt thou refuſe to hearken? *Will God heare his cry?* He ſpeaketh interrogatively, as if he ſhould ſay, Art thou ſo mad, ſo vain, ſo fooliſh, to promiſe to thy ſelfe being an hypocrite, that God will hear thy prayer? Oh no, then juſtice commeth to take place.

Reaſon 3 Thirdly, it is Gods uſe to doe ſo in other things, even upon the contempt of temporall bleſſings; and therefore much more in matters of grace and ſalvation. Thus God promiſed to give Iſrael the land of Canaan, *Num.* 12. 32. but

the

the text ſaith, *They tempted God ten times*, that is, (as ſome Expoſitors expound it) many times: or (as others) ten ſeverall times. But what ever the meaning of the text be, certainly it was very many times; ſo long, til at laſt *he ſware in his wrath that they ſhould nver enter into his reſt*. Beloved, though there be many a hot ſwearer that regards not an oath, yet certainly if the Lord ſweare, we may beleeve him: the Word of God is as ſtrong as oaths: if he ſay it upon his word, wee are bound to beleeve it: how much more then, when he confirmes it with an oath? Therefore if the Lord ſweare thou ſhalt not, how dareſt thou, how canſt thou hope or think ever to enter into his reſt? This was almoſt fourty years before he died, that the Lord made this oath againſt them: and God knowes how many thouſands of them fell ſhort, not only of the land of Canaan, but alſo of the Kingdome of heaven.

So God took *Iſmael* an hundred and ſeventeen yeares before he died: twenty yeares God offered him grace and repentance, but he would not take warning; a mocker he was, and a mocker he would be: for he mocked *Iſaac* when he was a child of ſix yeares old; and no meanes would reclaim him, before he heard the voyce, *Caſt out the bond-woman and her ſonne*: Out with him, (ſaith God) for he ſhall never be heire with my ſonne: this was an hundred and ſeventeen years before *Iſmaels* death.

And ſo God took *Saul*, five and thirty, or ſix and thirty yeares before hee died, according to

Mind this of Ismael againſt Iſaac.

Mind this Lords

Mind this of Saul

Josephus Chronology, (if it bee true;) ho
soever, hee tooke him divers yeares before
death: for so the Scripture makes it pla
1 *Sam.* 15.29. *The Strength of Israel will not*
nor repent: for he is not a man that hee should rep
Therefore because thou hast rejected the word of
Lord, the Lord also hath rejected thee from b
a King. And doe not think that thou by
prayers, and crying God mercy, canst ever
him: for his counsell is immutable, and hee
strong in his decree, and cannot change. Hith
to Grace and Mercy have been offered th
which if thou hadst imbraced, thou mightst h
found mercy from the Lord, and the Kingdo
should have been established and confirmed
to thee; but now it is too late: *for the Strengt*
Israel cannot lie.

God took *Esau* fiftie yeares before his death
for so long he lived, after he sought the bles
with teares: but he was a hunting when G
was a calling: he was following his prophan
nesse when God was wooing him to repentan
At last when he called for repentance, and sou
it earnestly, yea his soule was carefull for to
it; yet hee could never obraine it, though h
sought it earnestly with teares fiftie years bef
he died.

Now if the Lord so severely punish contem
of temporall blessings, O how will he pun
the contempt of proffers of grace and salva
on! I tell you, God will bee more strict in r
venging of this sinne, then of any other sinn

he will come with Martiall law against all those that contemne his Gospel, *Joh.* 3. 18. *He that beleeveth not, is condemned already.* Doth Christ preach repentance and salvation, and the Kingdome of God, and wilt thou not repent and beleeve? Martiall Law (beloved) martiall Law, hang him up; for he is condemned already. Even like a Souldier that rebels against his General, & forsakes his Colours, they doe not cast him into prison, and stay for the Assizes, or Sessions, but give him Martiall Law, even hang him up: So if the Lord sound his Gospell in thine eares, and offers thee conditions of peace, knocking at the doore of thy heart by his Spirit, and thou refuse to open to him, thou art condemned already: for the Strength of Israel cannot lie, nor repent. Oh therefore take heed now whiles his word sounds in thine eares, while his Spirit secretly whispers in thy heart to thee, open to him, for else thou art condemned for ever.

Take notice then, that God doth commonly give men a day, and no man or Angel doth know how long this day lasteth. To some it lasteth to their last gasp; to some, to their old age; and to some, it is cut off in their childhood. God gave the Angels a day, the which because they neglected, they are reserved in chains of darkenesse untill the great judgement day. God gave *Cain* a day, *Genes.* 4. During all the time of this day, though *Cain* sinned again and again, and went on in his sinnes a great while, yet he heard nothing but a still voyce, *If thou doe well Cain, shalt thou not*

be accepted? but if thou doſt ill, ſinne lieth at the doore. But when no meanes will prevaile, but *Cain* will goe on adding ſinne to ſinne, and murder unto all the reſt of his ſinnes, and ſo let goe the ſeaſon of mercie, the Lord tells him from heaven, that the day of grace is paſt, the gate of mercy is ſhut againſt thee: for *thou art now accurſed from the earth.* As if the Lord ſhould ſay, Before I gave thee a day of ſalvation, and offered thee mercie, but thou wouldſt not accept of it; but now I have clapt a curſe upon thy ſoul, that thou ſhalt never claw off. So God gave *Nineveh* a day to repent, *Jona.* 3. Yet fourty dayes and *Niniveh* ſhall be deſtroyed. God gave the Fig-tree a day, even three yeares, before hee would have it cut down. God gave the old world a day of an hundred and twenty yeares; during this time God ſent unto them *Noah*, a Preacher of righteouſnes, to call upon them to repent, & ſo ſet it down alſo, that *his Spirit ſhall not alwayes ſtrive with men, but his time ſhall be an hundred and twenty yeares*: yet one writes, that the Lord cut off twenty of the hundred and twenty yeares, becauſe of their iniquities, which were ſo grievous, and provoked him ſo much, that they haſted him to come before he would have done. In all this ſpace if they had repented, they ſhould have found mercy from the Lord: but when this time was gone, and the day of grace was out, the deluge came in upon them, and God by his judgments overthrew the whole world.

You may ask me when this day or ſeaſon of grace doth end, or ceaſe.

I anſwer, that neither men nor Angels can tell; but this I ſay, it may bee yet this day of grace laſteth unto thee; now it may bee God ſpeaketh home to thy ſoul, now it may be God warms thy heart, and gives thee good purpoſes & reſolutions: now it may be the Lord Jeſus paſſeth by thee in a good thought and deſire, lay hold on it, for thy day may ceaſe this very night, for ought thou knoweſt. *Luke* 17. 22. *The time ſhall come* (ſaith Chriſt) *when you ſhall deſire to ſee one of the dayes of the Sonne of man, and ſhall not ſee it.* Now is the day of Chriſt upon you, now is Chriſt offering and preaching himſelfe to you, but if you let this day paſſe, thou mayſt deſire to have one of the drops of that blood that hath been offered to thee, and yet never have it: thou mayſt deſire to feele one rap of that Spirit that hath knockt at thy heart, and yet goe without it: thou mayſt intreat for one dram of that mercy that hath been offered, and thou haſt rejected, but it ſhall never be granted to thee: God may clap that fearfull ſentence upon thee, *Now henceforth never grow fruit more on thee*, never repentance come into thy heart more. If now thou wilt not repent and be converted, the Lord may ſet it down in his decree from this day forward, that thou mayſt fumble about thy ſinnes, but ſhalt never get victory over them: thou mayeſt ever bee mourning for thy corruptions, but never mourne aright for them: thou mayeſt blunder about repentance, but never doe the work.

Ezekiel

Ezekiel 24. 23. *You ſhall not mourne nor weep, but you ſhall pine away for your iniquities, and mourne one towards another.* There is many a ſoule ſo contemning of God, and not taking up repentance while they may have it, this plague of God is come upon them, that they are ever repenting, and are never able to repent, ever poring upon their ſinnes, but never able to come out of them; they pray and pray againſt them, but their prayers moulder away under them: for they ſhall *pine away for their iniquities.* What is the reaſon? He ſheweth in the 13. verſe: *Becauſe I would have purged thee, and thou waſt not purged, thou ſhalt not be purged any more.* Becauſe I gave thee line upon line, precept upon precept, motion upon motion, Sacrament upon Sacrament, Sabbath upon Sabbath, and ordinance upon ordinance, becauſe I uſed all fair meanes and foule means, I awaked thy conſcience, and ſtirred up the motions of grace in thee; but becauſe I would have cleanſed thee, and thou waſt not cleanſed, thou ſhalt never be cleanſed. A fearfull ſentence it is, if mens hearts were ſoundly opened to conſider rightly of it.

And as there is a perſonall day, ſo there is a nationall day; if the nation turne unto God during that time, then that nation ſhall finde mercy, but if they neglect that day, then God will hide thoſe things from their eyes that belong to their peace, as Chriſt ſaith of Jeruſalem, *Luke* 19. 42. *O Ieruſalem, if that thou hadſt known in this thy day, the things that did belong to thy peace! but now*

they are hid from thine eyes: in this thy day; if thou hadst known it during that day, it had been happy for thee; but now the day of grace is gone, the Lord hath concealed it from thee, and thou shalt never perceive it any more.

Some mens day of grace God endeth even in their very childhood; therefore if there be any little ones, any children here in this congregation, that are of age to know what belongs unto an exhortation, to them I speak, that they take heed how they rebell against the commandment of a father or a mother, or master, against the teaching of Gods word; for though you be children, yet God may inflict judgements upon your heads; for not onely the day of grace, but also the day of life may be cut off from children, as 2 *Kings* 2.24 Four and twenty childred were torn in peeces for mocking the Lords Prophet. Somes mens day of grace is not shut up untill their youth, some not untill their old age, some not untill they are a dying; and if they refuse then, they are like, yea sure to perish for ever; I know the day of grace may have several returns, but at last Gods Exchequer will be finally shut up.

May not a man be called at the eleventh or twelfth houre of the day? The day of grace lasteth alwayes; and doth not the Apostle call the day of life the day of grace? 2 *Cor.* 6. 2. *Object.*

It is true, the Lord calleth men at the eleventh and twelfth hour; but yet look and you shall see in the twentieth of *Matthew*, that they *Very true Answ.*

were

were not called at the first houre, nor at the second nor third houre, nor at the sixt and ninth houre, i. he doth not say he found the same men that he found at the first, and third, sixth & ninth houres, but he saw others standing idle: No, those that were called at the first houre, came in at the first houre; and they that were called at the third houre, came in at the third houre; and they that were called at the sixth & ninth houre, came in at the sixth and ninth houre. Well, doth God call thee in thy childhood, in thy youth, or in thy middle age, now at the first or sixth, or ninth houre, now come in and labour in God's vineyard, and worke out your salvation with feare and trembling, and make use of the season of grace, now whiles it is upon you: for if thou be called the first houre, the sixth is for another, and not for thee; if thou bee called the sixth houre, the ninth houre is for others and not for thee; if thou be called the ninth houre, the eleventh houre is for others and not for thee: The Text saith, *He came and found others standing idle in the market place, and said unto them, Why stand yee here idle? And they say unto him, No man hath hired us*; as if they should say, We never had any means of salvation, we have had no Ministers to preach unto us; but now God calls upon thee to come in, this is thy houre, look unto it. If God call thee, see thou come in, whether it be at the first or third houre, at the sixth or ninth hour, lest the Lord in his wrath clap hardnesse of heart upon thy soule.

But

But you will ſay, that the day of life, and the day of grace are parallel'd and likened one to another; and therefore there is hope ſo long as a man remaines in the congregation of the living.

I anſwer, it is true indeed, that the day of grace laſteth ſo long as the day of life: 1. In regard of others, for others are ſo to eſteeme of it, the Miniſter is to looke to his people, as to a people to be converted as long as they live.

2. In regard of a mans owne ſelfe, hee is ſo bound to believe, for the commandment of faith ſtandeth in force on a man, ſo long as hee liveth, and therefore infidelity and deſpaire ceaſe not to be ſinnes, till a man is actually in hell; when he is in hell, then they are no ſins, becauſe then he is not commanded to beleeve, but are part of the puniſhment of the damned; but whilſt a man lives it is a ſinne, for men are now bound to lay hold upon Chriſt and to beleeve, at what houre of their life ſoever.

3. It may be ſaid to laſt all a mans life long, becauſe it is bounded within the compaſſe of life: for no man hath a day of grace after this life. But what is the meaning of all thoſe Scriptures which ſhew how God doth *deliver up men* unto the *Spirit of giddineſſe*, and unto the *Spirit of ſlumber*? And what meanes the *hardening of mens hearts, and ſearing of mens conſciences*, but onely to ſhew that the day of grace may end unto a particular man, ten, twenty, thirty, nay fourty yeares before his death?

The

1. Becauſe God may harden a mans heart, *Jerem.* 13. 16. and deale with them as with Iſrael in the Rocke, ſo ſhut up their hearts, that they ſhall never melt at any Sermon, never be wrought upon by any judgment, God having cloſed them up in a rocky heart, that he ſaith of them, *Can the blackmore change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots? then may they doe good that are accuſtomed to doe evill.* The blackneſſe of the Blackmore is onely in the out-ſide of the skin, yet all the art under the heavens cannot blot it out: So if once hardneſſe poſſeſſe thy ſoule, all the preaching of the Miniſters, and all the means of grace in the world, can never bring it unto that frame and temper, as to make it melt under the hand of God; I tell thee, thou that uſeſt to come up to Sermons day after day, and refuſeſt to repent, living ſtill in thy ſinnes, there is no hammer nor beetle in the world more hard then thy heart: as thoſe men and women that ſit under the preaching of the word, and heare the doctrine of life, like raine from above, beating and knocking on their conſciences, and on their hearts, to awaken them out of their ſinnes, and yet notwithſtanding will not repent at laſt, they prove to be *deafe Adders*, that ſtop their eares gainſt the word, charme the charmer never ſo wiſely.

2. God may ſeare mens conſciences; Doth thy conſcience tell thee that thou art a lukewarmling, and wilt thou not be reformed? Doth thy conſcience tell thee that thy prayers and

thy religion is rotten and unſound, and that thy repentance is hypocriticall and naught; and that for all thy vaine hopes, thou art but a diſſembler, and yet remaineſt in thy ſinnes, and wilt thou not be bettered hereby? Take heed; for that man that runnes on in ſinne againſt the voyce of his own conſcience, that man ſinnes the ſinne of *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 13. 8. God bid him ſtay ſeven dayes untill *Samuel* came: *Saul* ſtayes full ſeven dayes within one houre, at laſt his luſt began to bawl: What? ſhall I ſtay for a Prophet thus long? Stay, ſayes his conſcience; Why? (ſays *Saul*) I waited for him ſo long, even ſeven deyes lacking but one houre. Stay (ſaith God to his conſcience) for the word of God bids thee ſtay ſo long: he ſtayed one day, and two dayes, and ſix dayes, and ſeven dayes but one houre; Stay (ſaith his conſcience:) no, hee would not; but, *I forced my ſelf*, (ſaith the Text) as if hee ſhould ſay, I hardened my heart to do it, though the word of the Lord, & my own conſcience bid me ſtay and not do it, yet *I forced my ſelfe* to doe it: What was this mans ſinne? Was it his offering of ſacrifice, and calling upon God by prayer? No, the Lord commands us to call upon him in time of diſtreſſe; and being commanded, it was lawfull. Was it his ſinne to meddle with the Prieſts office? No: for he did but appoint the ſacrifice, the Prieſt offered it. What? was it the breaking of one houres time? No: for he had ſinned more againſt God then ſo: but this was his ſinne, that he went againſt his own conſcience,

science, when God stood in the way, when co science stood in the way: conscience said st but he would not stay: God bid him stay, but would not stay. And this is the sinne of ma thousands amongst us; mens consciences t them that they must not be drunkards, mens co sciences tell them that they must not be wor lings, they must not be swearers, they must n be luke-warme professours, they must pray be ter then they do, and have other faith then y they have, if ever they meane to be saved; wi thou yet against thy conscience force thy self go on in thy sins from day to day, and never reformed? take heed lest the Lord be provok to set thy sinne upon thy head, and shut up th heart, and conclude thy eternall destruction.

This is all very true

Obj. Suppose I go on in my sinnes, and follow m wicked courses now; what if I seek him hereaf ter, and humble my soul before him with fasti and prayer, and when I lie upon my death-be I send a ticket unto my Minister to pray for m will all this do me no good?

Ans. Surely no, (saith God, *Jerem.* 15. 1.) *Thou Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my affecti could not be toward this people: cast them out of sight.* Dost thou lie sick upon thy death-bed were *Samuel*, *Job*, or *Daniel* the Minister o thy Parish, and thou shouldst send thy ticket u to them, desiring them to remember thee i their prayers; if *Noah* stood in the Pulpit, a *Job* and *Daniel* were here before the Lord for plead for thee, yet he would not hear thee.

Be

But ſuppoſe I humble my ſelf by faſting and prayer, will not God hear that? *Object.*

No if thou neglect the day of grace. *Jer.* 14. 12. *When they faſt, I will not hear them: and when they offer oblations, I will not accept their cry: but I will conſume them by the ſword, by famine, and by peſtilence.* You may ſet up your faſtings, prayers, and humiliations, you may lament and mourne, and pine away your ſelves in your ſins; but it is not all your prayers and faſtings, it is not all your lamentation and mourning, that will do you good, ſo long as the counſell of the Lord is rejected. *Becauſe I called, and ye would not anſwer;* therefore *you ſhall call, but I will not hear:* they thought that the Lords eares would alwayes be open, and that when they called the Lord would have anſwered, and that the day of grace would ever remain; but God ſaith, *I will not hear* them, they would never have ſought if they thought the Lord would not hear them, but all their ſeeking was in vain. *Anſw.*

You will ſay, *At what time ſoever* a ſinner repenteth he ſhall have mercy. *Obiect.*

It is true, if thou *repent from the bottome of thy heart*, but thou maieſt come with many a degree of repentance, and yet never repent whileſt thou liveſt: if thou repent from thy heart, and root out thy ſins, then God will put away thy ſins; but thou maieſt go on in repentance and calling upon God, and performing many duties of Religion, and yet be hardned; look how much Religion will ſtand with ſelf-love, ſo much thou *Anſw.*

maieſt have after the day of grace is gone. Self-love may make a man flie to prayer, and run after Sermons, and go on in many holy duties, and give over many ſins; look how far ſelf-love may drive thee unto holy duties, ſo far thou maiſt go, and yet notwithſtanding remaine hardned. O therefore let us not delay, nor put off the time of grace, nor let go ſalvation while it may be had: *then* ſhall they call, but I will not anſwer: he doth not ſet down when this time is, it may be it is now, it may be not this ſeven yeers, it may be not till thy death.

Doct. 2. *Doct.* It may this very day, even this very Sermon, this very houre may be thy day that art now in thy ſins: that if thou repent not at this very one Sermon, thou negleſteſt eternall life for ever; loſe the benefit of this Sermon at this time, and thou maieſt loſe eternall ſalvation, and never have it more. The thiefe that robd this day, how doth he know but this one robbery may bring him to the gallows? So the man that ſins this day, how doth he know but that this very dayes work may bring him to hell? *Deut.* 32. 35. *To God belongs vengeance: their feet ſhall ſlide in due time.* Therefore if a man ſin againſt him he may ſtand to day, and to morrow, and many dayes; but when the *due time* comes, even the time which God hath ſet, then up goes his heels, he ſhall ſlide and break his neck: thy houre-glaſſe runs in heaven, and thou ſeeſt not when the ſand comes to the bottome, but when it is out, then down thou goeſt to hell for ever.

There

There was one reſolved to kill *Julius Cæſar* ſuch a day; the night before, a friend ſent him a letter to acquaint him with it: but being at ſupper, and buſie, I wil not look upon it now, (ſaith he) to morrow is a new day. The next day when he ſhould have read his letter, he was ſtabd. Whence this proverbe came in Greece, To morrow is a new day. God ſends thee a letter and a meſſage from heaven to day, hear his voice to day, repent and come out of your ſins, or for ever to hell; to day be converted and ſanctified, or for ever be hardned. Doſt thou refuſe to hearken to day, and putteſt it off untill to morrow? it may be to morrow may be a day of Gods wrath, and then thou mayeſt be hardned, ſeared, and bound over unto the great day of Gods vengeance: to morrow God may ſet the decree upon thy ſoul, that thou ſhalt never repent. Therefore if thou refuſe this, thou refuſeſt all; for what knoweſt thou, but this very day may be thy day?

Reaſ. 1. The reaſon is, becauſe Gods patience is in his own breſt, and who can tell how long it will laſt? Haſt thou *Momus* his glaſſe-window, to look into Gods ſecret counſell? haſt thou a key-hole to look into Gods treaſurie? canſt thou ſtand on tiptoe, to look over Gods ſhoulder, to look into Gods decree, to ſee how long his patience will laſt? It may be God hath ſuffered thee till this day, thou art guiltie of ten thouſand ſinnes, and yet he is patient towards thee; God hath ſtayed thus long for thee, that haſt ſworne

I know not how many oaths, God hath born thus long with thee that hast told I know not how many lies, prophaned I know not how many Sabbaths, contemned I know not how many ordinances, and sleighted I know not how many judgements, yet Gods patience is in his own breast, it is the long sufferance of God. Thou mayest say, I would fain have it to morrow, and this seven yeers, but alas, it is his long sufferance and not thine: and how dost thou know when he will conclude it? it may be this day as well as to morrow. *Joel* 2. 13. *Rent your hearts, and not your garments,* (saith the Prophet) *for the Lord he is gracious, and mercifull.* This word [*for*] hath a great deal of force in it: 1ᵗ. It is a *descriptive* [*for:*] for he is gracious and a mercifull God: therefore rent thy heart, and let thy soul burst within thee, that thou hast sinned against him: for he is a mercifull God, and it may be he will pardon all thy sins, and heal all thy rebellions committed against him.

Secondly, it is an upbraiding [*for:*] upbraiding thee for thy sins: rent thy heart therefore, why? he is a patient God; wilt thou go on in thy sins against such a patient God? and rebel against such a loving Father, that hath loved thee with so much compassion? Rent thy heart, for he is patient.

Thirdly, it is a comforting and incouraging [*for:*] rent thy heart, for there is incouragement for thee to repent, give over thy sins, and go to the throne of grace. For there is much merci-

mercie to welcome thee, and great patience for to bid thee come home, and abundance of grace for to incourage thee; therefore rent thy heart and come home unto the Lord, for he is patient and long-suffering.

Fourthly, it is a forewarning [*fo* :] rent your hearts, for the Lord is gracious and mercifull, slow to anger, and of great kindnesse; yet his mercie lasteth, yet his patience endureth, yet he hath all his attributes, and yet he is pleased to manifest the same, still tendring grace and mercie unto thee. Oh turn unto him, while these endure, or else thou shalt perish for ever.

Fifthly, it is a threatning [*for:*] now he is gracious, now he is mercifull, but his mercy will end, his patience will end, and then if thou hast not rent thy heart before, it will be too late then. Therefore as ever thou lovest thine own soul, now rent thy heart, and turn unto God.

It is Gods own proclamation; *The Lord, the Lord, slow to anger, and of great mercie, forgiving iniquity and sin.* Yea what man soever he be, that humbles his soul before him, he shall find grace and mercie with him; yea abundance of mercie, pardoning iniquitie, transgression and sinne; yea any thing: Let but a soul come prostrate before him, humbling his soul, he will pardon his sin. But as it followeth in the words; *He will by no means clear the guiltie*; if notwithstanding all Gods patience and mercie, thou go on in thy sins, the Lord will never forgive thee, but will visit thy sinnes upon thee unto the third and

fourth generations, becauſe thou haſt withſtood the day of grace. Beloved, men run on in their ſins, as if ſo be an Angel from heaven ſhould cry unto them and tell them, yet God will be good unto them, yet God will ſhew them mercie, and forbear them. Beloved, let your conſciences anſwer, if you ever heard the Lord God ſay to any of you, thus long I will forbear you. No, Gods patience is in his own breaſt, and therfore no man knows how long it will laſt.

Reaſ. 2. A ſecond reaſon is, becauſe Gods patience giveth no marks or inklings of it, before it ends: commonly when God ſtrikes a man with death, he giveth ſome ſignes of warnings of it before, as ſickneſſe, and pains, and gray hairs, and many ſorrows, &c. Now becauſe thy life is in Gods hands, thou careſt not for it, but ventureſt to go on in thy ſinnes, hoping to have ſome warning, though thouſands be cut off without it; but the day of grace may come to an end, and yet thou never have any inkling or warning of it beforehand: commonly when God ſtrikes a man with death, he tels him of it before-hand by aches and pains, as if the Lord ſhould ſay, Now thou ſhalt die, now will I take thee out of the world. But when the Lord taketh away the day of grace from a man, though the ſpirituall man may take ſome notice of it, yet there is no ſenſible apparition of it, but after the day of grace is ſet upon a man, he may be as ſtrong and luſtie as before, he may come to Church as well after as before, performe religious duties, and do many good

things.

things, as well after as before; as *Saul* went on in duties of Religion, as well after *Samuel* had pronounced the Lords doome upon him; how many times was he offering ſacrifice unto the Lord after the Prophet told him, that he was a man *reiected*? how many good ſpeeches came from him? as when *Samuel* met him, he ſalutes him with theſe words; *Bleſſed be thou of the Lord, I pray thee turn again with me, that I may worſhip the Lord.* A man would have thought that *Saul* had been a good convert. No, no, before all this his judgement and doome was ſet upon him; God ſteals upon him and ſaies nothing; he claps his plague upon their ſouls, and holds his peace.

Iſa. 42. 14. *I have a long time held my peace, I have been ſtill, and refrained my ſelf; now will I cry like a travelling woman, I will deſtroy, and devoure at once.* The Lord ſhews here how he deals with men, they go on in their ſins, but the Lord holds his peace; they provoke him every day, but the Lord refrains his anger: but now all at once his wrath breaketh forth upon them. *Pſal.* 64. 7. *God will ſhoot an arrow at them ſuddenly*, their ſtroke ſhall be at once. The Lord ſuddenly ſhoots a ſwift arrow at thee, no ſooner it is ſhot, but it enters into thy bowels. When the Lord comes upon a man, he comes ſuddenly, when he ends the day of grace upon him he doth it ſuddenly. He ended the day of grace on the Scribes and Phariſees even in the very Sermon time, while Chriſt was preaching unto them, they were de-

livered up to hardneſſe of heart: ſo many were delivered up to hardneſſe of heart in the time of *Hoſea's* prophecie, *Hoſ.* 4. 17. *Ephraim is joyned to idols; let him alone* (ſaith God:) as if he ſhould ſay, Sermon, let him alone; Preacher, let him alone; Spirit, let him alone; Chriſt, let him alone. Beloved, if we ſtand out againſt God, and reject the day of grace, the Lord may ſay, Word, let ſuch a man alone, and never convert him; Chriſt, let ſuch a man alone, and never redeeme him; Spirit, let ſuch a man alone, and never ſanctifie him; Sacraments, let ſuch a man alone, and never ſeal up any comforts unto him: a fearfull ſigne that men are come to this houre, do we not ſee that men come to the Word, and the Word lets them alone in their ſins? do not men come to the Sacrament, and the Sacrament leaves them ſtill in their filthineſſe? men come unto good duties, but good duties let them alone, and do them no good: and this is the condition of many thouſands in the world. Therefore oh think upon this you that have made a league with your ſins, and an agreement with hell: hear this delivered to you this day, that the day of grace may be ended, and God may come and clap his curſe upon men, and never give them any inkling of it at all.

Reaſon 3. A third Reaſon is, becauſe God reckons upon every houre, if God kept not a ſtrict account of time, how many Sermons you have had, how many mercies you have injoyed, how many croſſes he hath warned you by: if God kept not a true

true talle and account of every houres time, you might rub on many dayes, and moneths, and yeers, and ſpend much time in fulfilling of your luſts; but God keepeth a reckoning of theſe things, yea of everie houre, and of every minute. *Acts* 17. 30. *The times of ignorance God regarded not; but now he admoniſheth all men to repent.* Alas, when men live in their ſins through blindneſſe and ignorance, and know not God, the Lord takes no ſuch ſtrict notice of them, but lets them go on longer and longer; but when the Lord ſends them his Word and Goſpel, and affords them the means of grace, he doth the more ſtrictly look unto them, and takes the more exact account of them, before they had the means of grace, the Lord *winked* at them, and did not ſo narrowly watch them, but looked over mens ignorance, (as the originall hath it) but now God ſends his Word and Goſpel, he *admoniſheth all men to repent*, he winks at never an houre, but ſets down how oft thou haſt had exhortation from thy Miniſter, how often thou haſt had warning by ſickneſſe and afflictions, how often thou haſt had checks from thine owne conſcience, how many admonitions thou haſt had from thy friends, how many times thou haſt had the ſound of the Goſpel to ſound in thy eares to bring thee home unto God. *John* 2. 7. 11. *This is the firſt beginning of miracles that Jeſus did. John* 4. 58. *This is the ſecond miracle that Jeſus did*, ſaith the Text, God ſets down this, is the firſt, this is the ſecond time: *This is the ſecond Epiſtle I wrote to*

you,

you, saith *Paul*. Oh this is *the third time* I wrote unto you, 2 *Cor.* 13. that when I come I will not spare: so God sets it down in his catalogue, this is the first time that I have warned this man, this is the second time, this is the third time, that when I come I will not spare; the Lord counts how long he hath sought unto thee, and intreated thee by his mercies, how long he hath allured thee by his Word, how long he hath warned thee by his judgements, how oft he hath smote thy heart with fears, and thy conscience with terrours. Now if for all this thou wilt not return, just is it with God to cast thee downe to hell for ever.

Reas. 4. The fourth Reason, and last: it is a wonder that the day of grace is not ended already, and that thou art not now in hell. When a thing in this kind is looked for to be done, it is a wonder that it is not done: it is a wonderfull mercie of God unto this Kingdom that yet the day of grace is continued amongst us, in regard of our long fear and expectation of the contrary. For from the highest to the lowest we have highly revolted more and more, and provoked God his very face. What contempt of Gods Word? what neglect of Gods ordinances? what prophanations of Gods Sabbaths? what scoffing and deriding of Gods servants? how doth wickednesse and prophaneness stand up in the highest roome, climbe up into the highest chambers? But as a whore condemned to die being with child, is repriev'd for a time, untill her child be brought forth: so

this

this Land hath gone a whoring from God, yet ſo long as God hath ſome children to be brought forth, which are not yet come unto the birth, he lets his grace and Goſpel continue untill theſe children be brought forth. Therefore now (beloved) if we ſtick at the birth and come not forth, an hundred to one but we ſhall miſcarrie.

When Chriſt comes firſt to thy ſoul, he witneſſeth grace and mercy to thee, if thou wilt repent and amend; yea he witneſſeth forgiveneſſe of ſins, redemption, and ſalvation, if thou wilt beleeve; but if not, he will be *a ſwift witneſſe againſt thee*, Malachi 3. 5. if thou continue and goeſt on in thy ſins: *Agree with thine adverſary, while thou art in the way quickly*, Matth. 5. 25. Now God is in the way with thee, Chriſt and his Spirit are in the way with thee, thou needeſt not now ſay, who ſhall go up to heaven and bring down the Spirit to thee; Chriſts Spirit is now knocking at thy heart, and now God offers his mercy to thee, now thou art in the way, now he cals unto thee to accept of his mercie, now he commands thee to take Chriſt, now hear him calling to thy heart, now he tenders grace unto thee, imbrace it: now receive Chriſt and make up thy peace with him: remember the ſaying of the Apoſtle, 2 *Corinth.* 13. 5. *Examine your ſelves whether you be in the faith; prove your ſelves. Know you not your own ſelves, how that Jeſus Chriſt is in you except you be reprobates?* As if the Apoſtle ſhould ſay, I have been an Apoſtle to you this yeer and half, I have preached thus and thus long unto

unto you, I have wrote one Epistle to you to reform those abuses that were among you, and now I write this second Epistle, to declare the whole will and counsell of God to you. Now cast up your reckoning, examine your selves, and make up your account: see if you have gained Christ. O, I have Christ, (saith one) I have Christ, (saith another.) I, but *prove it*, saith the Apostle, and try your selves: know ye not that by this time *Christ is in you*, or else you be *reprobates*? As if he should say, if yet Christ be not in you, and grace wrought in your hearts, if yet you lie festring in your sins, and go on in your wicked wayes, it is to be feared you are reprobates: either you or we are reprobates, you for not obeying, and we for not delivering the truth of God unto you: *But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates*: vers. 6. God forbid that this word should be ever spoken unto any soul in this congregation: but this let me say, is there any man here that goes on in his lusts, and in his carnall course of life, in pride, security, hardnesse of heart, and impenitencie, that hath not the soundnesse of grace? he hath a fearfull signe and brand of a reprobate, whose conscience is stifled: it is a fearfull signe, if he be not a reprobate before God, yet he is one that is not approved, but for the present in a wretched and miserable condition. Now is the time of grace wherein God hath spoken to your souls, remember that vengeance that is coming towards you if it be rejected; now the Lords fat-

lings

lings are readie; his oxen, and ſheep are ſlaine, and laid upon the board; Chriſt is ſacrificed, and his blood is ſhed, and the grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is tendered to you; you that have grace, get more grace; you that have no grace, get grace and Chriſt, and take heed of neglecting any opportunitie of grace, for that may come unto thee in one houre, that will never come again.

FINIS.

VAIN THOUGHTS ARRAIGNED

At the Barre of Gods IVSTICE.

SET FORTH

In a Sermon preached at Lindon in Kent September 29. 1629.

By that vigilant and painfull Minister of the Word,

WILLIAM FENNER, B. D.

Sometimes fellow of *Pembroke Hall* in *Cambridge*, and late Parson of *Rochford* in *Essex*.

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A SERMON OF

Mr. WILLIAM FENNERS, preached at *Linton*, Septem. 9. 1629.

PHIL. 3. 18, 19.

For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are the enemies of the crosse of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose belly is their God, whose glory is their shame, and who mind earthly things.

THE Apostle in the closure of this Chapter, setteth out unto us a twofold kind of life: First, the life of the godly, and that 1. by way of exhortation, verse 17. *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as you have us for an example*: 2. by way of declarati-

on, verſe 20. *But our converſation is in heaven, whence alſo we look for the Saviour, even the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Then ſecondly, hee ſets forth unto us the life of the wicked, which walked otherwiſe then the Diſciples and Apoſtles of Chriſt walked, in theſe words read unto you. The Apoſtle warned thoſe wicked men again and again, but they would not take warning, neither did they thinke themſelves ſo bad as hee made them, and therefore they thought they ſhould ſpeed well enough, he preached to them in the pulpit, and wrote unto them, though hee were ſix hundred miles and more diſtant from them, (and that *weeping* too) that they are *enemies to the Croſſe of Chriſt: whoſe end is deſtruction, whoſe God is their belly, who minde earthly things.*

The words may be conſtrued two wayes; either as being meant, 1. Of ſeverall wicked men, as firſt of Heterodox walkers, ſuch as walk contrary to the Apoſtles: 2. Of wicked perſecuters of the Goſpell, enemies to the Croſſe of Chriſt: 3. Of Drunkards and hypocrites, *whoſe God is their belly*, : 4. Of Ambitious and proud perſons, *whoſe glory is their ſhame*: and 5. of covetous and carnall minded men, *who minde earthly things*: or as *Chryſoſtome* expounds the word (& ſo it ſeems is the meaning of them) to be meant of one ſort of men, *who mind earthly things*, they are ſuch as walk otherwiſe then the Apoſtle walked. Who are they that *mind earthly things?* they are *enemies of the Croſſe of Chriſt*: Who are they that *mind earthly things?* Whoſe hearts

and

and affections run more after the things of this life, then after the crosse of Christ: Their *God is their belly:* Who are they that *mind earthly things*, and think onely how to increase their living, and enlarge their estate, and make them sure unto themselves? their *glory is their shame.* Who are they that *mind earthly things?* that give their hearts (the flower of man) and their affections (the flower of their soules) unto the world, and unto the base things of the world, still they are they that mind earthly things, which set eirher their loving thoughts, or their carking and caring thoughts, or their fretting and vexing thoughts; or their eager, covetous, and vain thoughts on earthly things, they are they that walk otherwise then the Apostles of Christ walked; These are those that are *enemies to the crosse of Christ, whose God is their belly, whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things, whose end is destruction.*

Hence then will we observe this point:

That those whose minds and hearts run habitually on earth and earthly things, their end must needs be destruction. *Doct.*

Jerem. 6. 19. *Heare, O earth,* (saith God) *behold I will bring evill upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto me, but rejected my Law.* Wherein we may see 3 things, 1. That the curse of God is the desert of cursed evill, & vain thoughts: 2. That the plague and curse of God is the event of evill and vaine thoughts; evill thoughts doe not onely deserve

Gods plagues, but alſo bring them: 3. Here is notice given to all the world; *Heare, O earth*: as if he had ſaid, Here is a reckoning that you little dream of, I will bring a plague upon you not onely for your idolatry, for your whoredome and fornication, but even for your vaine thoughts, *Prov.* 24. 9. *The thoughts of the wicked are ſinne*; the Lord doth not only condemne the actions and courſes of wicked men, but ſets his curſe upon their very thoughts. Sinne is of an homogeneall nature, of which every part of a thing is the whole; every piece of ſtone is ſtone, for it hath the nature of the whole: even ſo it is with ſinne, the leaſt part of ſin, the leaſt thought of ſinne, the leaſt ſhiver of ſin, is ſin, and abominable before God.

Reaſ. 1.

The reaſons why thoſe, whoſe hearts and thoughts run habitually on earth and earthly things, muſt needs end in deſtruction, are, 1. That mans end muſt needs be deſtruction, that never repents: Now, ſo long as a mans thoughts run uſually and habitually on the things of the world, that man never repents; repentance not onely cleanſeth the outſide of man, but the inſide alſo, even the heart; repentance goeth as farre as the Law of God goeth, where the word of God begins, there repentance muſt needs begin: now the word of God begins and ſtrikes at the heart, as ſaith the Apoſtle, *The word of God is ſharp and powerfull, ſharper then any two-edged ſword, piercing to the dividing aſunder of the ſoule and ſpirit, the joynts and marrow, and is a diſcerner*

of

of the thoughts of the heart, *Heb.* 4.12. Now then, if the word of God ſtrike at the thoughts of the heart, then repentance muſt goe and reach ſo farre to reforme and amend the things of the heart, or elſe he never repents. Let a man ſweep his houſe never ſo much, yet it is not clean ſo long as there remains one Cob-web in it: ſo if thy heart be ſwept from drunkenneſſe, whoring, and ſwearing, and yet if the old Cob-web of vain thoughts remaine in any corner of thy heart, not waſhed out, nor ſwept down, thou haſt not as yet repented: *Oh Jeruſalem* (ſaith God by his Prophet) *waſh thy heart from wickedneſſe, that thou mayſt bee ſaved: how long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee? Jer.* 4.14. Mark how the Lord inforceth his exhortation: ſee how he backs his counſell, [*that thou maiſt be ſaved:*] as if he had ſaid, thou canſt not bee ſaved, unleſſe thou waſh thy heart from vain thoughts: *how long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?* He doth not ſay, why doe vain thoughts come in thee? for they will come into the beſt & moſt holy heart; but how long ſhall they *lodge* within thee? If but vain thoughts do lodge in man, & take up their neſt in his heart, if a man let his thoughts dwell upon vain things, and hee give way unto them, and uſe them as his market, trade and recreations, hee cannot be ſaved; it is an emphaticall kind of ſpeech: as if the Lord ſhould ſay, O Jeruſalem, thou never conſidereſt this, and thus he doth as it were pity and compaſſionate them in their blindneſſe and ignorance, and

horrible beſottednes, that think that thought is free. Beloved, when the Lord comes to reckon wᵗʰ the world, he wil not only reckon with them for their pounds and ſhillings, for their hundreds and thouſands of ſins; for their murders, whoredomes, blaſphemies, &c. but he will call them to account for their leaſt ſinnes, the pence and farthing ſinnes, even their very thoughts: Agree with thine adverſarie quickly, while thou art in the way, leſt he deliver thee up to the Jaylor, and thou be caſt into priſon: thou ſhalt not come out untill thou haſt paid the utmoſt farthing; thou muſt deliver up thy farthing as well as thy pound ſinnes, or elſe thou never agreeſt with thine adverſary. When the Lord by his Prophet calls upon his people, exhorting them to repentance, he willeth and exhorteth them to *change their thoughts*, *Eſay* 55. 7. Repentance is the change of the thoughts, according to the Engliſh proverb, (*I have changed my thoughts*:) *Look unto thy feet when thou entreſt into the houſe of God*, *Eccleſ.* 5. 1. Thou canſt never go to the houſe of God without thy feet: the thoughts and affections of the heart, are the feet of the ſoule, and thou canſt never go to God without them, and therefore if thy heart and affections run habitually on earthly things, thou didſt never repent, and ſo thine end is damnation.

Reaſon 2

The ſecond reaſon is, that mans end muſt needs be deſtruction that hath no Chriſt in the world: now ſo long as thy thoughts run habitually on earthly things, thou haſt no Chriſt. It is not enough

nough for a man to hang on Chriſt, for many a man doth ſo, and yet is cut off from Chriſt, and periſheth for ever: thou muſt not onely hang upon Chriſt, but thou muſt alſo get into Chriſt. As in the old world, when the deluge came, and the waters increaſed ſo greatly, that the mountaines and high hills were covered with them, and the people could not ſave themſelves by getting unto the tops of the mountaines, no queſtion but many ſeeing the Ark ſwim above the water, did climb up and hang upon the ſides of the Ark, thinking to ſave themſelves, yet none of them were ſaved, but thoſe that were gotten into the Ark: ſo many a man will catch hold of Chriſt, but his hold will be gone, and hee periſh for ever, unleſſe he get into Chriſt. Now a man can never get into Chriſt, unleſſe his heart bee purged from vain thoughts: For Chriſt when he entreth into a man, cleanſeth his heart from vain thoughts, 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. If Chriſt once come into the heart, he will ſet up his throne there: he will hold up his Scepter of Righteouſneſſe in it: when Chriſt commeth, ſee what a work he will make in the heart, he will not ſuffer a proud thought to remain there to upbraid him: he wil not ſuffer ever a ſinfull luſt to ſtand up to beard him; but he wil *caſt down every imagination, and all high things that exalt themſelves, and hee will bring every thought into ſubjection unto himſelf.* Therfore if thy thoughts run after the luſts of thy owne heart, thou haſt no Chriſt in thee: for Chriſt (beloved) will never dwell in a foule houſe: I

know there is no wheat without some darnell, no gold without some drosse, no wine without some lees; so there is no man but hath some sin; no man so clean, but hath some defilements of sin upon him: therefore if a man have not the cleansing grace of Christ in him, cleansing his heart from vain things, there is no Christ in him: for Christ will never dwel in a foule heart. Now beloved, the very vain thoughts of a man defile him: as Christ saith, *Matth.* 7.21,22,23. *Out of the heart proceedeth evill thoughts, and they are they that defile a man.* All these, not onely *murders, and adulteries, and uncleannesses*, and all other abominable sins, which mens consciences startle at; but *evill thoughts* defile a man: Assure thy self that so long as the league of these evill thoughts is not broken, thou hast no Christ as yet within thee. Hence is that exhortation of the Apostle, *Colos.* 3.1,2. *If you be risen with Christ, then seek those things which are above.*

Brethren, you must remember that there be two kinds of exhortations in Scripture: the one, if a man do them, blessed and happie is he; the other, if he do them not, yet he may find mercie: it will be a grief and a sorrow to him, but it follows not that he shall miscarrie. But there are exhortations that tye to obedience, that must be obeyed, or else there is no salvation, as this exhortation of the Apostle; it is not left to our choice to do or not to do, but *if a man be risen with Christ*, he must do it: he must *seek the things that are above*: that man then that hath his thoughts

thoughts run habitually on the world, that man hath no Christ in him; and therefore his end must needs be destruction.

Thirdly, that mans end must needs be destruction that loves not God; now so long as thy thoughts run habitually on the things of the world, thou hast no true love of God in thee: For thus runs the Commandment of love, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might.* Matth. 22.37. It is as if Christ should have said, thou shalt love God *with all thy heart, and with all thy heart, and with all thy heart:* for the *soul, mind,* and *heart* are all one, that no man might dare to keep any part of their heart from God. Every one will say, I love God with all my heart, I go to Church and serve God with all my heart: I hear the Word, and pray with all my heart: I receive the Sacraments with all my heart: Dost thou so? and yet let thy thoughts run upon the world? dost thou pray, and yet letteſt vain thoughts lodge within thee? dost thou hear the Word, receive the Sacraments, and yet letſt vain thoughts diſtract thee? Doſt thou walk in thy calling, and yet letteſt vain thoughts ſteal away thy heart, and yet ſayeſt thou, I love God with all my heart, when thou takeſt away thy heart from God? How doſt thou think thy thoughts, with thy heels, or with thy heart? Surely thou ſayeſt, with my heart: Why then if thou loveſt God with all thy heart, thou muſt give thy thoughts unto God; God that cals for thy heart, cals for all the heart: now the

Reaſ. 3.

the heart is nothing but all a mans heart, all the affections and desires, all turnings and windings, all things that are in the heart do but make up the heart: and therefore when God cals for thy heart, he cals for all the powers and faculties of the soule. And therefore the Prophet *David* would blesse God *with his soul, and all that was within him.* Psal. 103. So thou must give thy thoughts, and all that is within thee to God, or else thou givest God nothing; therfore that mans end must needs be destruction that loves not God.

Reason 4. Fourthly, that mans end must needs be destruction, that never gives over his sins: and so long as thy thoughts run after the world, thou canst never forsake sin: thou maiest resolve and think on the contrary, yet so long as thy thoughts run habitually on the things of the world, thou dost not forsake sin. Wicked and carnall men may have the eyes of their consciences opened, and their hearts awakned, whereby they may see their sins, and the hellish evill and danger of them: whereupon they may resolve and purpose to forsake them; and then they will make a covenant with God that they will not do thus and thus; I have been touchie and cholerick, but I will be so no more; I have been a prophane swearer and blasphemer of the Name of God, but I will be so no more; I have been a drunkard, and an unclean person, but Lord thou shalt see a reformation in me. Nay it may be he will tell his Minister of it, and his father and his mother,

his

his wife, his children, and all his friends too of it: but when he comes to his cold blood again, and theſe cold hraces which fluttered ſo, come to be cold in him, ſo that his heart comes to it ſelf again, then vain thoughts reſt in his heart, and he returns to his old ſins again, as the dog to his vomit, and the ſow being waſhed, to the wallowing in the mire.

The Apoſtle excellently deſcribes a man that can never depart from his ſins: *They have eyes full of adultery, which cannot ceaſe to ſin: 2 Pet. 2. 14.* where the Apoſtle ſpeaks not onely of that adulterie which is a breach of the ſeventh Commandment; but of ſuch an adulterie, which is a perfect breach of every Commandment, when the heart runneth a whoring after every ſin and vanitie: when the eye of the ſoul is full of adulterie, the heart cannot ceaſe to ſin; when the eye cannot ſee an object of gain or profit, but the mind is preſently agag, and runs after it; when it cannot ſee an object of delight and pleaſure, but it is ſtraightway caught by it: when he cannot ſee any wrong or injurie done unto him, but preſently he is inflamed with revenge, and his heart runs after it: I ſay that if thy eye be thus full of adulterie that thou canſt not ſee the occaſions and hits of ſin, but preſently thou art inſnared, and thy ſoul is taken by it; thou art the man that canſt not ceaſe to ſin: therefore untill thou turne the eye of thy ſoule, which is the thoughts and affections of thy heart, another way; thou wilt never ceaſe to ſin. For whereſoever

ever thou lookeſt, thou wilt be inſnared, ſo long as thy thoughts are evill and vitious; either upon pride, or covetouſneſſe, or ambition, or envie, or delights; thy ſoul will look aſquint on God: and untill theſe vain thoughts of thine be crucified, thou wilt onely look upon the ſatisfying of theſe vain luſts of thine.

Prov. 3. 6. *In all thy wayes acknowledge God, and he ſhall direct thy paths.* In all thy wayes think on God, or elſe thou maieſt go to many duties in Religion but never be directed in thy going; thou maieſt pray a thouſand times, but never be eſtabliſhed in thy prayer: thou maieſt go from Lecture to Lecture, and yet never be eſtabliſhed in thy ſervice: thou maieſt go about many things and never be eſtabliſhed in any thing, unleſſe God be in all thy thoughts: a man may go on in a courſe of Religion, but it is at hap hazard, he is inconſtant, and unſteadie in his courſe, unleſſe in his heart he think upon God; and therefore his end muſt needs be deſtruction.

This then may ſerve, firſt, for humiliation to the godly: ſecondly, for matter of condemnation to the wicked.

Vſe 1. First, for humiliation; are vain thoughts thus damnable, that when they beare ſway in the heart, they make that mans end to be deſtruction? How then ought this to fill the faces of them that have the Spirit of Chriſt, with ſhame and confuſion, and to make them in a holy manner to be confounded of themſelves, and to think of the emptineſſe, naughtineſſe, and vani-

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ties of their hearts? Beloved, thou canst not go to prayer, but abundance of vain thoughts will be about thee, like wasps to assault thee; thou canst not go to the Word, but these vaine thoughts will be a humming in thy eares; thou canst not go about the works in thy calling, but vain thoughts will haunt thee, and creep into thy meditations, and take away the main burthen of the work all the day long. Beloved, this should make a godly man ashamed, and confounded in himself in the consideration hereof. The Prophet *David* was so confounded and ashamed hereat, that had not God poured in mercie and comfort into his soul, he had been distracted, and should have despaired, considering the company of vain thoughts that lodged within him, *Psal.* 94. 19. where he shews what abundance of distracting thoughts he had; that if God had not sustained him with comfort after comfort, he had even been overwhelmed in despaire by them.

†*Augustine* saith, a mans thoughts are not in his own power: the heart of man is like tinder; and if the devill cast a spark into it, thou canst not hinder it from taking fire; but thou maiest hinder it from burning further. A ship may have leakes in her, and thou canst not hinder the coming in of water into her: but by thy pumping and industry thou maiest save her from drowning in the water; even so evill thoughts, though they be rooted out, yet they will come in again; A mans heart is like to the fig-tree that grew out of the stone wall, which *Epiphanius* speaketh

ſpeaketh of: the branches were lopt off, and it grew again; the boughs were lopt off, and it grew again; they cut down the body of it, yet it grew again: they pluckt up the roots of it, yet it grew again: till at laſt the ſtone wall and all was fain to be pulled down: Even ſo it is with vaine thoughts in the heart, a man may lop them off by godly ſorrow; he may cut them down, and root them up by mortification, and yet they will be ſprouting up, and riſing up again; till the whole body of ſin be pulled down, and deſtroyed in a man. *Gregory* ſpeaks of them, and ſaith, man may pluck them up, but yet not ſo but that they will riſe again.

The conſideration whereof ſhould humble us, and make us lowe in our own eyes: Oh then think with thy ſelf and ſay, Oh that my thoughts ſhould be ſo baſe, earthly and vain! what, have I not a God, a Chriſt, a heaven to think upon? have I not excellent Commandments of my God, and thouſands of ſweet and precious promiſes in Scripture to think upon? and muſt I be thinking on every bable? of every ſtraw, not worth the thinking on? Take the Apoſtles exhortation, *Whatſoever things be true, whatſoever things are honeſt, whatſoever things are juſt, whatſoever things are pure, whatſoever things are of good report: if there be any vertue, if there be any praiſe, think on theſe things*: Phil. 4. 8. What, are there ſo many vertuous things; ſo many holy and pure things; ſo many admirable and glorious things; ſo many heavenly graces, and divine promiſes;

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ſo many bleſſed paſſages of holy Writ to take up my mind? and ſhall I ſpend my thoughts and time upon ſuch vaine and curſed things as wil yeeld me no profit ? This ſhould aſtoniſh the hearts of Gods people, and greatly humble their ſouls.

Vſe 2. The ſecond Vſe may ſerve for matter of condemnation unto the wicked: let this doctrine ſtrike terrour into the hearts of thoſe men, that ſuffer their hearts to be taken up with vaine thoughts: as *Peter* ſaid unto *Simon Magus*, ſo let me ſay unto them, *Repent of this thy wickedneſſe, and pray unto God* (verſ. 8.) *that if it be poſſible, the thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee.* The Apoſtle doth not onely wiſh him to repent of his ſimonie and briberie, but alſo of the leaſt vain thoughts of his heart: pray unto God, if perhaps the very thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee: for beloved, the very leaſt vaine thoughts that thou thinkeſt, without repentance, is unpardonable: there is an impoſſibility of remiſſion of vain and idle thoughts without true repentance.

Oh what fearfull news is this to the world that lay not this to heart! Beloved, may we not now run into the eares and hearts of all earthly men with this point, whoſe minds and thoughts are earthly? Is it ſo that he whoſe thoughts run habitually on the world, his end is deſtruction? Then they that make no conſcience what their thoughts are, what their imaginations are, what they think of as they go up and down, how can

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such escape the vengeance of hell? Tell me then what thy thoughts are, are they not of thy hawks and hounds, of thy cattell and grounds, of thy gardens and orchards, rather then of Christ? When thou walkest in the streets whereon run thy thoughts, but on thy pleasures, and profits, and earthly delights? yea of every vanitie, and every delight canst thou think, rather then of God and his commandments. Thou comest to Church, thou prayest, and hearest the Word of God, but do not vain thoughts come along with thee? thou goest home again, but do not vaine thoughts haunt and dog thee?

It is the brand of a wicked man, *not to have God in all his thoughts*: Psal. 4. 10. when goods and cattell, plough and cart, pleasures and outward contentments are in his mind & thoughts, when ruffs and cuffs, houses and dishes, tables and faire hangings, or any thing but God can take up their thoughts; they can have thoughts of every thing, but of God they can think none; this is the brand of a wicked man, that he hath no blood of a Christian in him.

It is a true description of a Pagan and Infidel, that hath no knowledge of Christ, *to be vain in his imaginations*: Rom. 1. 21. *When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, but became in their imaginations vain*: vaine in their disputes, vain in their reasonings, vain in their thoughts, in their carriages and dispositions; so then, though thou knowest God, and hast things enough in thy mind, that convinceth thee that this

this God is to be worshipped; and understandest the worship of God, and the commandments of Christ: yet if thou glorifiest him not as God, giving thy heart and affections to him, but art vain in thy imaginations, thou dishonourest God. Hear what God saith unto such, *All the day long have I stretched out my hand unto a rebellious and gain-saying people, which walk in a way that is not good, but after their own thoughts, a people that provoke me continually to my face.* Isa. 65. 2, 3. As if God had said, I sent Prophet after Prophet, Minister after Minister, to instruct them in the knowledge of my wayes, I laboured to convert them, and to bring them home unto my self, and to work better thoughts in them; but still they are a people that *walk after their own thoughts*, that *provoke me continually unto my face.* There is never a thought of thine, but it is in the verie face of God, both thought and imagined.

But some man may say, I think of God and of Christ, of faith and repentance, and of calling on God, of mending of this and that course; I think of death, and of my last account, and every foot I have holy thoughts in my mind.

But beloved, give me leave, I pray you, for to speak something unto you, which, it may be, may stick by you while you live: I will propound these foure things and distinctions unto you; which I will use.

First, what? doest thou think of God and of heaven? then tell me whether thy thoughts be injective thoughts into thy heart, or thoughts

raiſed by thy heart; for there is a great deal of difference betweene thoughts injected and thoughts raiſed: God caſts good thoughts into a godly mans heart, which being fit ſoyl, it fructifies, and brings forth fruit. Again, God caſts good thoughts into a wicked mans heart, but becauſe his heart is not ſanctified, and therefore no fit ſoyl to harbour in, they die and vaniſh: God caſts in, and they caſt out: God caſts in again, and they caſt out again: therefore if thou haſt good thoughts, examine and try whether they be thoughts raiſed from thy heart or no; ſee whether thy heart be a renewed heart, a ſanctified, an holy heart, fit to bring forth good thoughts every day. Beloved, a wicked man may have a thouſand good thoughts, and yet go to hell in the midſt of them all: God caſt a good thought into the heart of the King of Babylon to go againſt Judah and Jeruſalem for to puniſh his people for their ſins, and to avenge himſelf on them for the breach of his Covenant: but what ſaith the text? *Howbeit he thought not ſo.* Iſa. 10. No, his onely ayme was how to get honour, how to inrich himſelf, to enlarge his territories, and to bring down the Nations under him, and to make his name and fame to be ſpread, and declared through all the world. So God caſts many good thoughts into many a wicked mans heart to repent, and to leave his drunkenneſſe, his pride, his ſwearing and whoring, to be holy and religious: howbeit hee thinks not ſo, but hee thinks how to eat and drink, how to be proud

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and haughtie; how to be rich and great in the world; how to be vain and licentious: yea thy thoughts are vile and vain all the day long.

Oh that men were wise truly to understand this! the want whereof is the cause why many thousands goe to hell and are damned for ever. I will make it plain to you: A wicked man reasons thus with himself; I confesse, and it is true, I sinne every day against God, and sometimes drink a pot with my friend, though sometimes I let fall an oath, and am overtaken in my infirmities, yet I thank God, hee hath sanctified my heart; for I think of God and of Christ, and I oft call upon his name, and let my thoughts run on good things; God and heaven are many times in my mind, and I am sorry when I doe amisse, and the Lord hath blest me with a large portion of outward things. Besides, I see these and these signes of grace in me, and therefore I think my case to be happy. And thus securely they live, and so they goe on, and so they die, and so goe to hell and perish for ever and ever. Here is the misery of it, many think of God, and of Christ, of death, and of their last account, of heaven, of hell, of faith, and repentance, of leaving sinne, of crucifying their lusts, and practising of holinesse. Now men think that their thinking of these things, is a part of their discharge, when indeed they are additions to, and peeces of their talents, which increase their judgements. God casts in a thought of repentance, of holinesse, of the remembrance of death, and last account:

Dost thou find thy heart never the better and holier by them? Then know it is only Gods haunting of thy heart, and Gods calling upon thee, and Gods inviting thee unto repentance, to leave thy sinnes, to come out of thy deadnesse and formalitie, to prepare for thy death and judgement; and therfore I say, if thy heart now think not so, if thy heart do not repent, beleeve, and grow more zealous, and thou art not drawn the neerer to God; I say then, that the more of these good thoughts that thou hast had, the greater thy doome will be: if thou hast had ten thousands of them, if they have been onely Gods haunting of thy heart, thinke thou then now of grace, of God, of thy poor soul, which is not bettered by them, nor made holy, then know they are peeces of thy talent, and it doth make thy torments in hell the greater.

2. Secondly, thou hast good thoughts, but the question is, whether they be fleeting or abiding thoughts: Many think of God, of grace, of heaven, of the word of God; and when they heare a Sermon, they will think of God; but these thoughts, though they come into their mindes, yet they goe away presently, they are in and out at an instant, in a trice, they pass away & are gone. Beloved, there are two kinds of vain thoughts; 1. vain, because the substance and matter of them is vain, and so all worldly thoughts are vain: 2. or else for their want of durance and lasting: and so are all thoughts of heaven, of God, and grace, and of Christ, if they vanish away, they are all

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vain thoughts, though they ſeem otherwiſe. Here what God ſaith, *Gen. 6. 5. God ſaw that the wickednes of man was great upon the earth, and all the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart are onely evill continually:* [all the imaginations] great is the emphaſis of this word [*all*] all the thoughts: yea all univerſally, are onely evil continually.

But you will ſay unto me, Doth not a wicked man think that there is a God; why, that is a good thought; doth he not think that this God is to be obſerved and worſhipped? why, this is a good thought; doth he not think that ſin is to be forſaken? that is a good thought; doth he not think of heaven, and of Chriſt? how then are their thoughts *onely evill*, and that *continually?*

I anſwer, becauſe all the thoughts of a wicked mans heart are vaine: that is, vaniſhing thoughts, not vain for the matter, which ſometimes may be good and holy, but vaine becauſe they ſoon vaniſh away; thoughts that come and tarry not, that leave no impreſſion in their hearts behind them, theſe are all vaine thoughts, according to that of the Apoſtle, *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wiſe that they are vain*: 1 Cor. 3. 20. Beloved, in a godly mans heart, when a good thought comes, it abides, and dwels a good while in him; and when it goes away it leaves a good impreſſion behind it; it leaves a ſweet ſmell and ſavour in the heart after it is gone, it's made more holy, and ſanctified by it. When a good thought comes into a godly mans heart,

it leaves the print of it behind; when a wicked man hath a good thought, he tosseth it up and down, and suffers it not to stay, but presently puts it away: let a thought of the world come in, and he can give it entertainment for seven dayes, yea for seven yeers, yea all his life he sets his heart as a wide gate open to receive them, and to entertain them: but if a thought of God, or of repentance, of holinesse and salvation come into his mind, he is tyred out with it, and it soon vanisheth away; therefore so long as thy thoughts are thus vain, though for the matter good, if thou hast never so many of them: yet if they abide not, but thou thinkest and unthinkest them again; if they come and give thy soule a jog, and so away; the more I say thou hast of them, though thou hast it any millions, the greater will be thy doome at the last day.

3. Thirdly, thou thinkest of God, but the question is, whether thy good thoughts be studied, or accidentall thoughts: a wicked man that runs gadding in his thoughts here and there, over the whole world upon this and that, and I know not what, in the midst of a lottery of thoughts he cannot chuse but stumble upon some good: he thinks on God, he thinks on Christ, he thinks on heaven; but it is by the by, these thoughts of his are not naturall; but if he think of the world, of his pleasures, of his outward delights and contentments, these thoughts arise naturally out of his heart, they are his owne. Now it may be a thought of God comes by the way, but

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a godly man not onely thinks of God, but he ſtudies how to think of God: it is his continuall endeavour to bring his mind to be fixed upon God; it is his whole care for to have good thoughts to dwell habitually in him. There is an excellent phraſe uſed to ſet it forth, *Malac.* 3.16. *They that feared the Lord ſpake one unto another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him of all them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his Name.* Where I pray you for to mark, that *thinking upon Gods Name*, and *the fear of God* are joyned together; for thinking on God, comes from the fear of God; a godly man thinks upon God and fears him; he thinks that God is alwayes with him in every place, and he trembles before him: he thinks God beholds all his thoughts and affections, and he trembles at him: he thinks as he walks up and down in his way, as he is imployed in his calling, as he is performing of any duty of Religion, that Gods eye is upon him and beholds him: and therefore he fears to offend and diſpleaſe him. A wicked man will ſweare and blaſpheme the name of God, and by and by it may be he will cry God mercy, and ſo he thinks of God. The man breaks out, it may be into wrath and malice, fury and paſſion, and then it may be a thought will come into his mind for to cry God mercy for it, and thus he thinks of God: The man is careleſſe, earthly, dead, and luke-warme in the performance of good duties; and becauſe his conſcience tels him

it is not good, he will ask God forgiveneſſe: he will be proud, vain and rotten in his ſpeeches, and then it may be a thought will come into his mind to ask God forgiveneſſe, and ſo he thinkes of God; he will think of the world, of his pleaſures, profits, and of his luſts and ſinnes, and then it may be a good thought will come into his mind, and then it may be he will think a little of God too. Beloved, this is carnall and devilliſh thinking on God; thy thoughts then of God muſt be joyned with the feare of God.

Fourthly and laſtly, thou thinkeſt of God, but the queſtion is, whether thy thoughts of him be profitable or unprofitable thoughts: a godly man thinks of repentance, and repents upon it: he thinkes of calling upon God more faithfully and fervently then hee did before: and hee accompliſhes his thoughts: for hee goes about it, and his heart is the better for it: Thus it was with *David* when he ſaid, *I thought on my wayes, and turned my feet into thy teſtimonies*, Pſal. 119. 59. *I thought on my wayes* (there was his good thoughts) *and turned my feet into thy teſtimonies*, (there was the profit of his good thoughts.) But on the contrary thou thinkeſt on God, but God hath never the more ſervice of thee: thou thinkeſt of leaving of thy good fellowſhip, and merry companions, but for all thy thoughts, thou retaineſt them ſtill: thou thinkeſt to give over all thy deadneſſe and luke-warmneſſe, and to get more zeale and fervencie: yet day after day, and yeare after yeare, thy heart

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is as dead, vain and ſecure as before, as ever before. Examine thy ſelfe then and ſee, thou haſt good thoughts (thou ſaiſt) but where is the profit of them? thou thinkeſt of leaving thy wrath, and of bridling thy filthy paſſions: but art thou inabled by thy thoughts to put up an injury the better? It may be thou thinkeſt on death: but is thy life the more holy and ſanctified by it? Thou thinkeſt on Chriſt and his blood, but is thy heart purged by it? Oh the wretched miſery of moſt men in the world, becauſe of the unprofitableneſſe of their thoughts! they have many good thoughts, but they want the profitable uſe of them, they get no good by them.

There is an excellent deſcription of the thoughts of wicked men (though it be Apocrypha,) *The heart of the fooliſh is like a Cart wheele, and his thoughts like the rowling Axletree.* As the Cart wheele goes round all the day, and yet remaines on the Axletree; ſo is it with wicked men, their thoughts wheele and wheele them up and downe a thouſand thouſand times, their thoughts run upon this thing, and then upon another thing, and ſo they towle up and downe continually, yet their heart is at the ſame paſſe it was ſtil; an earthly heart it was, & ſo it is ſtill, a profane heart it was, & ſo it is ſtil; a carnal proud heart it was, and ſo it remaines ſtill. But let theſe know, that the time haſtens wherein God will judge them even for heir very thoughts.

Where are they then that ſay *thought is free*? It is true indeed, it is free from mens knowledge, and

and from mens Courts, but not from Gods: they are not free from Gods all-seeing eye, and knowledge. *Thou hast tried me and known me* (saith the Prophet) *thou understandest my thoughts afarre off*, *Psal.* 119. Beloved, as you are in the Ale-house, or gaming-house, as you walk abroad in the fields, as you are imployed in your callings, or about any holy duty, God seeth all thy thoughts, what is going in, and what is comming out: there is never a thought in thy heart, but God sees it; how then can thought bee free? *God will weigh the thoughts of men*, Prov. 16. 2.

Beloved, what a fearfull day will that bee, when God shall take his Scales and weigh (no mans bodies and estates, for then it may bee that rich men and fat and grosse men, will out-weigh them that are better:) but hee will take mens thoughts and weigh them, hee will weigh their soules: he will take mens good thoughts, and put them into one scale, and their bad, earthly, carnall, and unprofitable thoughts, into another scale, and so try which weighes heaviest: Now if thy earthly and sinfull thoughts weigh heaviest, then downe thou goest into eternall damnation.

2. Secondly, as thoughts are not free from Gods knowledge, so are they not free frō Gods word; for Gods word can meet with them: for it is *lively and mighty in operation, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, Hebr. 4. 12. Doth the word of God discern the thoughts of mens hearts? Then much more doth the God of

of this Word: and therefore how can thoughts be free?

Thirdly and laſtly, they are not free from the condemnation of hell and damnation. *I am hee* (ſaith God) *that ſearcheth the hearts and reines, and I will give to every one of you according to his works*; or as ſome tranſlations have it, *according to your thoughts*: *Rev.* 3. 23. Now if God will ſo ſeverely puniſh thoughts, take heed then how thou retaineſt any evill thoughts. 3.

I ſhould here give you ſome meanes in the uſe, that ſo you might rid your ſelves from vain thoughts.

Firſt, love the word of God, if ever thou wilt come out of them, prize the truth of God, and labour to get thy mind and thoughts to bee ſet on better things; and then the thoughts of the world, and all vain things will vaniſh away. This courſe the Prophet *David* took, Pſal. 119. 113. *I hate vain thoughts, but thy Law doe I love*; How came it to paſſe that he *hated vain thoughts*? namely, by *loving of Gods Law*: if hee had not loved Gods Law, and thoſe excellent things therein, and ſet his heart on them, hee could never have hated vain thoughts: The way then to break off thy league with vain thoughts, is to be in league with good thoughts. Doſt thou complain of vain thoughts in prayer, in hearing the word, in receiving of the Sacraments, and art thou ſtuffed and filled with them, that thou canſt not think upon God and holy things? thou doſt hereby bewray thine owne rottenneſſe and *Means* 1

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corruption. And therefore know, that if thou loveſt the Lord and his Word, and didſt ſet thy thoughts upon him, thou wouldſt never have them ſo much employed about ſuch baſe things.

2. Secondly, if ever thou wouldſt rid thy heart of vain thoughts, eſpecially when thou art in holy action, thou muſt goe unto God by prayer, there is no greater bridle to reſtrain a man from vain thoughts, then this conſideration, that he is to goe to God. I ſpeak not this to the men of this world: Carnall men, who can ruſh into Gods preſence hand over head, without any feare or reverence, they can ſet upon any duty without any preparation: but I ſpeake it to the godly man, whoſe heart dreads and ſtands in awe of God: Wilt thou let thy mind rove and run all the day on worldly things? how then wilt thou call upon God? Doſt thou not know that this is the cauſe of thy dulneſſe, thy deadnes and wandrings of thy heart, when thou art about any good duty, namely, becauſe thou ſuffereſt thy heart to be laſhing out, and roving abroad on the world all day, no marvell if it keep his haunt at night: and therfore thy heart being vain, God will never heare thy prayer, *Job* 35.13. *God will never heare vanity*. Comeſt thou to God with a vain prayer? God will never heare it. Comeſt thou with a vain eare to the hearing of the Word? God will never heare it; or with a vain heart to the Sacrament? God will not regard it. Lay this ſeriouſly to thy heart, if ever thou

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wouldst have thy heart to the duty thou art about, busie thy mind upon good things, for if thy heart be accustomed to vain and wordly things all the day, it is no marvell if it returne to his haunt again at night.

Thirdly, consider that you have not *so learned Christ*: It is the Apostles argument, *Ephes.* 3. consider then what you have learned of Christ; hath Christ taught you so? hath Christ taught you such a love, and given you such a liberty, that you should love the world more then him, and imploy and bestow all your thoughts wholly in seeking after vain things? Hath Christ taught you such a faith as this? Hath Christ taught you such a repentance as this, to have your thoughts more upon the world then upon Christ? to repent of sin, and yet never forsake sinne? Have ye so learned Christ? Hath he not taught you such a faith as purifieth the heart, such a sanctification as cleanseth the soul and the minde, such an obedience as bringeth every thought into subjection unto himselfe? Therefore if now thou shouldst still retaine thy vaine, dead, earthly and carnall thoughts, it is not to learn of Christ: Christ teacheth thee no such doctrine, nor giveth thee any such licentious libertie; but thou learnest of the Devill, and of thine owne heart: for all evill and vaine thoughts arise from these three heads.

First, from the variety and abundance of the thoughts of the world, which our Saviour calles *the cares of this world.*

Second-

2. Secondly, from the fountaine of corruption in mans heart, the heart of man being alwayes like a sink, naturally running with filthinesse, or like a living quickset, alwayes bearing: so is it with the heart of man, alwayes imagining vain thoughts.

3. Thirdly, from the damned malice of the Devill, and his fearfull suggestions and temptations both within and without: the Devill is fitly called a *tempter and trier*; for by these suggestions and temptations hee feeles and tries mens hearts; and thereby knowing to what they are most inclined, and which way they are soonest overcome, accordingly he fits his temptations for to intrap them. Now these thoughts are infinitly variable, according to the constitution, place, quality, passions, affections, and conditions of men; as of the poore man in his beggery, of the rich man in his abundance, of the Minister in his calling, of the Magistrate in his, and so of all other men. Now the whole world is not able to fill the heart, how then shall wee number the thoughts of it? But for the better understanding, wee will rank them into these foure heads, to shew how thoughts become vain.

1. 1. Materially, mens thoughts are vain, when the matter of them is vain.

2. 2. Formally, when though for the matter, they are never so good, yet the manner of thinking them is evill.

3. 3. Efficientially, when the man that thinkes them is vain.

4. When

4. When it is a thought that might become the best Saint upon the earth, or a glorified Angell in heaven; yet the drift of the soule being carnall and vain, the soule thereby becomes vain also. 4.

First then materiall vaine thoughts, are all thoughts of the world, of the works of thy calling, of thy recreations, eating, drinking, sleeping, thoughts of thy wife and children, and the like; they are vain thoughts, not sinfull necessarily, yet they may come to be sinfull five manner of wayes. 1.

First, when we think of them primarily, that is, in the first place, when wee think of them before we think of God. Tell me then, what are thy first thoughts in the morning? Hereby a man may know his thoughts whether they bee good or evill. Consider, I say, what it is, that first presents it selfe unto thy thoughts: certainly, that which the h art is most haunted withall, and most taken up with, is most naturall unto it: If the heart be carnall and earthly, it will have carnal and earthly thoughts: if it be a godly and gracious heart, it will labour to make God the first in his thoughts. I know the godly man fails in many things, and many unruly thoughts in him may rebell; but it is the very griefe of his soule, and he will never rest nor be at quiet, till he hath got Balm from Gilead, strength from Christ for the subduing and crucifying of them, even of those vain and sinfull thoughts that stick closest unto their hearts, and are most prone unto them *Manner* 1.

them naturally: so that it is the practice of a godly man first in the morning to lift up his heart with his hand unto God; and when he is up, his thoughts are wholly upon God. See this in *David*, who considering that the Lord was present every where, made this use of it, *When I awake I am present with thee*, *Psal.* 139. 18. His heart was lifted up to God, he did endevour to shake hands with God (as it were) in his holy meditations, worshipping and adoring God with his first thoughts: he would be sure to give God the flower and Maiden-head of his first service and thoughts; as soone as ever hee was awake, his heart was in heaven. This shewes that the thoughts of men that live in their sins, are damnable thoughts: Thou that art a drunkard, a swearer, a prophane person, a carnall worldling, that never hast repented; I tell thee, that the very thinking of thy meat and drink is damnable, the very thoughts of thy recreations and of thy sleep, are damnable thoughts; to thinke of the workes of thy calling, yea of setting thy foot upon the ground, or of any thing that God hath commanded thee for to doe, are all damnable thoughts. Why? Because thou givest not God thy first thoughts. Wilt thou think of thy belly and back, before thou thinkest of God, and how to be converted unto him? Wilt thou think of thy Markets and Faires, before thou thinkest of thy reconciliation with God? The first thing that every soule is bound for to doe, is to get in with God: *First seek the Kingdom of God* (saith

saith our Saviour) *and the righteousnesse thereof*, *Matth.* 6. 35. Where our Saviour doth not forbid our taking of thought for the things of this life, but that they should not be sought after in the first place; so that our first thoughts and endevours should be after the Kingdome of heaven. Therefore all thoughts whatsoever, which are conceived before a man bee converted, and so thinkes of God, are all damnable thoughts.

Secondly, all worldly thoughts are sinfull, when we think of them too usually (as *Chrysostome* speakes) because we think of the universalitie of them. Beloved, it is lawfull to think of the world, and to think of our trade and imployments, to think of our corn, of our cattell, fields, barnes, wives, children: for if God have commanded or commended these things unto us, then surely he gives us leave to think on them, that so we may accompliſh our businesse the better; but let us take heed they bee not too usuall with us: for we have soules as well as bodies, and there is a heaven as well as an earthly business to think upon: thou art not to live here alwayes, therefore take heed that thy thoughts bee not too usuall and common upon the things of the world, let not earth and earthly things have too much of thy thoughts. As the Prophet *David* seeing the thoughts of wicked men wholly to run after the things of the world, he tells them, *all their thoughts perish*: and so I tell you, if that your thoughts on the world run together with heap

Manner 2.

and crowd, and then bundle them up in bundles, (as it were) they all prove damnable, and shall perish.

Manner 3. Thirdly, worldly thoughts are sinfull and damnable, if thou thinkest of them too savourly: a carnall minded man thinkes savourly of the things of the world, the thoughts of earthly things are savoury unto them; a wicked man hee will thinke of God, and of the world; but which is the savoureſt thought to him? He will think of Christ, of heaven, and of the word of God, and of such a Sermon he heard, but alas, hee finds no savour, taste, nor relish in them; he finds no sweetneſſe, joy, or delight in them: but when he thinkes of the world, of his gold and silver, of his lands and livings, Oh these are merry thoughts unto him, these are sweet unto him, and pleasant to him, and his heart it not at home in his owne nest, he can think of these seven dayes, nay seven moneths, nay seven yeares together, and yet never be weary, but his thoughts as full and as fresh as at the first: But bring him to a Sermon, or to a prayer, and he is jaded presently, his heart is empty, and his thoughts are at an end: For (saith the Apostle) *they that are after the flesh savour the things of the flesh*, Rom. 8. 5. It is a true note of an earthly carnall, fleshly heart, to be thinking on earthly and vain things savourly. Thou maist think on the world, but it must be onely with a cast of thy thoughts, as one that lookes upon a thing with a squint eye: but when thou art to think on God, or on the things of God

God, then thou must gather all thy thoughts and affections, thou must lay all the powers of thy soule together, and thou must imploy them only to this work.

Fourthly, worldly thoughts become sinfull, when we think of them without counsell; then (saith *Solomon*) *they come to nought*, when a man considers not afore-hand what thoughts are necessary and needfull, and so restraines and keeps off all impertinent thoughts; then his thoughts will prove distrustfull, carking thoughts, caring for the morrow, contrary to the rule of Christ, *Matth. 6. 33. Take no care for to morrow, let to morrow care for it selfe.* He doth not forbid here Christian provident thoughts: for godly, honest, and sober thoughts, are fitting and necessary, but he seems hereby to cut off all distrusting, carking thoughts. *Manner 4.*

Fifthly, worldly thoughts come to be sinfull, when they are thought needlesly: And here I will shew how farre a man may thinke of the world; namely, so farre as his necessary busines requires. Suppose a mans businesse be upon merchandise, it is lawfull to think of it, and of his shop and wares; but if thou wouldest know how farre; why so farre as is it for thy businesse: But if thou hast so many of them, that thy heart is taken up with them, and thy mind still on them, then they are sinfull thoughts. There is many a man that in following of his businesse bestowes more thoughts then his businesse requires, hee hath ten thousands of super- *Manner 5.*

fluous thoughts; but let such remember the exhortation of the Wise man, *establish thy thoughts by counsell*: counsell will tell a man when hee hath thought enough, and what thoughts are fit for his imployment. Not that any man can carry himselfe alwayes in that golden mediocrity or mean, but a Christians care must bee daily more and more to pare off all superfluous thoughts of earthly things.

2. Now we come to the 2^d^ thing: 2. Thoughts are vain formally, when though the matter of them be never so good, yet the manner of thinking them is evill. It is possible that a wicked man goe to hell, though he performes the same things for the matter of them, that a godly man doth: a godly man comes to Church, so doth a wicked man; a godly man prayes in his family, so doth a wicked man; a godly man reads the Scriptures, so doth a wicked man; a godly man repeats Sermons, and conferres of good things, so doth a wicked man. There is no work that comes to the outward act, that a godly man doth, but a wicked man may do the same: here onely is the difference, in the manner of working. I will set it out to you by a place of Scripture; *In a great house* (saith the Apostle) *there are not onely vessels of gold, and of silver, but also of wood and of stone, some to honour, and some to dishonour*, 2 Tim. 2. 20. Mark how the Apostle here sets out the reprobate and the elect, comparing them to vessels of honour, and dishonour: the vessels of dishonour are of the same matter

matter that the veſſels of honour are of: ſuppoſe it be pewter or ſilver, caſt it into an honourable forme, and it will bee a veſſell of honour; but caſt it into a diſhonourable forme, and it will be a veſſell of diſhonour, for baſe and mean ſervice; even ſo it is between a true Chriſtian and a meere formall profeſſor, the matter of their ſervice is one and the ſame; ſuppoſe it be hearing the Word, or receiving of the Sacraments, prayer, or the like, the ſubſtance and action is the ſame; but take the ſame prayer, and let a godly man caſt it in his forme, and it is holy and prevailes with God: let a wicked man take the ſame prayer, and caſt it into his diſhonorable forme, and it becomes ſinfull, not regarded, and abominable in Gods eyes. For hearing of the word of God, the godly man heares, and the wicked man heares; the matter in both is the ſame; the godly man he caſteth the Word into a godly mould, he heares the Word, and he trembles at it, he heares the Word and beleeves it, he heares the Word, and his heart bowes to it, and reſolves to practiſe it: a wicked man hee heares the Word too, but he caſteth it into a diſhonourable mould, hee heares it with deadneſſe and dulneſſe, without trembling, without faith and obedience. So a godly man may think thoughts of God, and ſo may a wicked man think thoughts of God, the matter of both is good; yet the thoughts of the wicked are vaine, though hee thinks of God, becauſe he caſteth it into his diſhonourable frame: he feares not God, his heart

trembles not at God, but his heart is as full of dead earthly affections as before; hee thinkes of hearing the Word, but it is after his own fashion, he thinkes of praying, but he prayes with his owne spirit, and not with the spirit of Adoption. Adoption is Faith.

The Psalmist tels us, that the whoremaster, the drunkard, and the thief, thinks of God, but it is after his own fashion: *Psal.* 50. 21. *These things hast thou done* (saith God) *and I held my tongue, and thou thoughtest that I was even such a one as thy self*: A wicked man goes on in his sins, and thinks that they are not so devilish and abominable, as some say that they are: and he thinks that God thinks so too; he is earthly, carnall, luke-warme, and dead-hearted, and if he repent at the last, hee thinks all will be well, and he thinks God is of the same mind too: he goes on in his drunkennesse, swearing, pride, and hypocrisie; and he thinks if he do but remember to ask God mercy, and to cry, Lord receive my soul, when he is going out of the world, he thinks he shall not go to hell, but be carried to the joyes of heaven, and he thinks God is of his mind, that God thinks so too: But mark what the Lord saith, *I will reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thee. Oh consider this you that forget God, lest he teare you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you.*

3. Thirdly, mens thoughts are vain, when the heart that thinks upon them is earthly and vain; wherefore if all the wicked men in the world should

ſhould lay their heads together to think a good thought, yet they cannot: for their hearts are vain hearts, ſinfull hearts, they may think of excellent propoſitions concerning God, his worſhip, his word, and ſervice; but ſo long as the heart that thinks upon them is carnall and vain, they cannot ſpeak that which is good, as ſaith our Saviour: *Matth.* 12.34. *How can you ſpeak good things?* Why, may ſome man ſay? may not a wicked man read a Chapter in a Bible? are the words ſo hard to be underſtood, and pronounced? cannot a wicked man take a Sermon and read it, and heare a Sermon and repeat it? what are letters and ſyllables ſo hard to be pronounced?

I anſwer, (beloved) that is not the meaning of our Saviour [*how can ye that are evill ſpeake good things*]: no, no, a wicked man may read Gods word, and propound good queſtions, as well as a true Chriſtian; but he cannot ſpeake good words, that is, he cannot ſpeak them from a good heart; and therefore his heart being carnall and vain, good words in his mouth are as a jewell in a ſwines ſnout: It is a word indeed, but not a ſpeech, when he reads or pronounceth Gods word. *Ariſtotle* ſaith, that ſpeech is nothing but the expreſſion of that that is within the heart. Now then, if the word and truth of God be not ingraffed in thy heart, if thy heart be not heavenly when thou ſpeakeſt of heavenly things, thou doſt pronounce them, but not ſpeak them. But when thou ſpeakeſt of earthly

things, then thou ſpeakeſt to the purpoſe; becauſe thy heart is ſet upon them, and thy minde and thy tongue goe together, there is no jarre or diſcord betwixt them: but if thy heart be not pure, though thou ſpeakeſt good things, or holy things, yet in Chriſts ſenſe thou ſpeakeſt them not: For (ſay I) how can a vain, evill, corrupt heart think good thoughts? *An evill tree cannot bring forth good fruit*, (ſaith our Saviour) he doth not ſay, that an evill tree cannot be made good, for it may bee graffed into another ſtock, divers wayes there are to make it good: but ſo long as it is a corrupt tree, it cannot bring forth good fruit; *Doe men gather grapes of thornes, or figges of thiſtles?* Doſt thou goe to a drunkard, and thinkeſt there to finde any religion in him? or to a whoremaſter to finde grace in him? Doſt thou goe to a ſwearer, or a prophane perſon, and thinkeſt thou to find any feare of God in them? Indeed ſometimes there may bee ſome morall good found in them, but they are as a pearle in a dung-hill, out of his place.

Fourthly, all mens thoughts come to be vain, when the drift and end of the heart and ſoule in thinking of them, is vain.

But thou wilt ſay unto mee, the end of my good thoughts is Gods glory. What? is it not to Gods glory that we goe to the Word and Sacraments, that we pray and give almes?

I anſwer, the end of every good work in it ſelfe is Gods glory, but is it the end of the worker, ſpeaker, or thinker? I make no queſtion

queſtion but the end of a good action in it ſelfe, is the glory of God; ſo the end of prayer is the glory of God, the end of all preaching and Sermons is the glory of God, the end of giving of almes, and of all good thoughts, is the glory of God: but the end of the man that prayes and preaches, what is that? the end of the hearer and giver of almes, what is that? the end of him that ſpeakes well, what is that? Beloved, moſt men have falſe and corrupt ends, which we will branch out into theſe three heads.

For the firſt, men will be thinking and plodding from morning till night of their worldy buſineſſe: Now becauſe they know they muſt think on God, to make God amends, perhaps they will think on him at night, when they have diſhonoured him all the day. So men will ſwear and ſwagger, drink and be drunk, and when they have done, ſay, Lord have mercy upon me, and ſo they think to make God amends. What (beloved) will yee ſweare, ſwagger, drink, be drunk, and lie, be ſecure and worldly, and then ask God forgiveneſſe to make him amends? This is to break *Priſcians* head, that you may give him a plaiſter. Will you treſpaſſe your neighbour, that you may ask him forgiveneſſe? This is a damned and deviliſh religion, yet this is the religion of many men in the world, you ſhall have them keep dayes and weekes and yeares in the obſervation of the times of Gods worſhip, they will keep the Sabbath in comming to Church, they will hear Sermons, pray and think of God,

but

but all this is to make God amends for the wrong that they have done him: they know they have offended God, and therefore they will doe ſomething to make him amends: like thoſe wicked men in *Ieremies* time, who did *ſteale, murder, commit adultery, ſweare falſly, and burn incenſe unto Baal, and walk after the Gods whom they knew not*, and then come and ſtand before God in his houſe, which was called by his name, and ſaid, *We are delivered, though we have done all theſe abominations.* As if God ſhould ſay unto wicked men, What, will yee ſweare, ſteale, lie, and be earthly, giving up your ſelves unto all manner of lewdneſs in the breach and contempt of my commandements, and then thinke by making a prayer unto me, and by lifting up your eyes unto me, and by giving your ears to hear my word, thereby to make me recompence? No, no, *I have ſhewed thee, O man, what is good*, Micah 8.

Secondly, the end of mens thoughts is commonly to collogue with God. Let a man be under the croſſe, in calamity, pain and miſery, then God ſhall heare of him often, then he will think of God, and of his ſinnes: nay, the beaſtlieſt wretch in a whole Pariſh, upon his ſick-bed, then, Oh how will he call upon God, then ſend for the Miniſter, let him pray for me, read a chapter or ſome good booke; then God ſhall have ſervice upon ſervice, then he ſhall have the firſt, ſecond, and third courſe. But all this is but to be raiſed up again; and then when hee hath received a little ſtrength, he falls off againe: like the

the Jewes, who when *God slew them, they sought him: and they returned and enquired early after God; nevertheless they did but dissemble him with their mouthes, and flatter him with their double hearts,* Psal. 78. 34. There is many a man that seeks to God, yea, that seeks to him with teares, and performes many a good duty, and yet he doth but flatter with God, he doth it but to curry favour with him; hee is afraid of sickneſſe, crosses, plagues and death, and curses upon him, if hee should not doe so: and therefore to prevent this, he will dissemble some service to God.

Thirdly, to smother and choak their owne consciences; their hearts think and tell them, that they must think of God, their consciences tell them, that they must have some holineſſe, some religion, that they must keep the Sabbath in some sort, that they must pray, and goe to Church: and hence it is, that the drunkard, swearer, whoremaster, will sometimes have thoughts of God, and will be performing some outward acts of Religion. Why? his conscience otherwise would not let him be at rest; but it is as the Devils bandog to drive him to it.

Thus when the Prophet commanded the people to worship the Lord, to reverence his name, to hallow his Sabbaths; their consciences told them, that they must doe so, or else all the threatnings of wrath and vengeance denounced by the Prophets, would come upon them. Hence it is that the Lord by his Prophet exhorts, saying, *Arise yee, and depart, for this is not your rest*; your

minde

minde hath another haunt, you have this and that back luſt, this is not your reſt. Doth thy heart reſt on God and good things? If thy heart be good and holy, ſo that it takes up its reſt in God, and in Chriſt, then it is well; but if thou onely turneſt aſide to good duties, and falleſt as it were by chance upon holy things; away, away, (ſaith God) this is not your reſt. *Ariſtotle* ſaith, that the being of a thing conſiſteth in the end of a thing. Therefore if the end of thy thoughts and courſes be earthly and vaine, then certainly thy religion is earthly and vain. Thou goeſt up and down; what is it that thou lookeſt after? Is it that thou maiſt have grace, or that thou maiſt follow thy calling, & get thy living? Is it this that thou wouldſt have, for which thou keepeſt ſuch a digging and ſcraping, and ſuch a laying up? Then thy end is carnall and vain, and thy drift and end declareth the truth of thy ſoul, that it is carnall and vain.

THE JUDGEMENT OF THE VVORLD By SAINTS at the last Day:

DELIVERED,
And learnedly discourſed in a Sermon preached

By that vigilant and painfull Miniſter of the Word,

WILLIAM FENNER, B. D.
Sometimes fellow of *Pembroke Hall* in *Cambridge*, and late Parſon of *Rochford* in *Eſſex*.

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A SERMON OF
Mr. WILLIAM FENNERS, upon this ensuing Text.

1 Cor. 6. part of the 2d verse.

Know yee not that the Saints shall judge the World?

THE Corinthians thought *Paul* had converted many poore meane men amongst them, Chapter 1. 26. 27. *God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty*: yet the Nobles, the Lawyers, the Counsellers, the chiefe men in the Citie, the Apostle had not converted one of them, or at the least very few. Brethren, you see your calling, who they are that be converted to the obedience of the Gospell of Christ from the evill of their wayes: not many wise men after the flesh, not many rich,

rich, not many noble; some few there be here and there one, but for the most part they are a company of poore beggerly Christians: Now (it seemes) these poore Christians having controverfies one with another, went to Law among themselves, and that before unbeleevers. The Apostle condemnes this their going to law, and would have them cease their suits and quarrels one against another before the unjust and unbeleevers, and that by foure Arguments:

1. First, by the shamefulnes of it, verse 5. *I speak it to your shame*; as if he should say, Are you such fooles, that you cannot take up these matters among your selves? that you cannot make references of your wrongs to mediate one to another, but that you must goe to law before unbeleevers?

2. Secondly, from the scandalousnesse of it: It is a thing so scandalous and offensive to those that are without, that I wonder any of you dare bee so bold as to goe to law one with another. What will the world think? What, are these the men that professe the Gospel? Are these they that have the *Wisdome* of God in them, and that are led by the Spirit of God? And have they no more understanding in them, then when they have any matter of controverfie, they cannot end it amongst themselves, but must goe to law before *the unjust and unbeleevers*? (as they term them.)

3. Thirdly, from the unseemingnesse of it, in the second verse. *Doe you not know that the Saints shall*

shall judge the earth? What? hath God made you Judges of the world, and doe you goe to be judged by the world? Or, as *Ambrose* speakes, hath God appointed you to be Judges of the men in the world, and are you not fit to bee Judges of the things of the world?

Fourthly, from the strangenesse of it; *Dare any of you?* He speakes interrogatively (vers. 1.) It is a strange thing that you should come to that impudencie against the Gospel of Christ: one would think that you should tremble and quake at such a thing as this is. What, is there never a wise Christian amongst you? never an understanding Professor that is able to take up a controversie, or decide and judge between his brethren? What a strange thing is this? Then he backs it with foure Arguments. 4.

1. Because they were *Brethren*, vers. 6. *Brother goes to law with brother.* 1.

2. Because it was about *the things of this life.* What? hath God made you judge of heavenly things, of *Angels*, and are you unfit to judge of *the things of this life?* 2.

3. It was about *small matters* (ver. 2.) whereas you shall sit upon *men* and *Angels*, and the weightiest matters in the world, the greatest things of Gods law, judging them to the greatest penaltie and punishment, even to eternall damnation: and are yee *unworthy* then *to judge* even of *the smallest matters?* 3.

4. And lastly, Because it was about such things, as the meanest Christian in the towne might have 4.

taken up, and have ended: *Set up them that are leaſt eſteemed.*

Doe you not know, that the Saints ſhall judge the world?

Doct. I need not goe far for a point, the word affords it: The Doctrine is; That *the Saints ſhall judge the world.*

It is an old truth, yea as old as the world it ſelfe: you may reade it in the fourth verſe of *Judes* Epiſtle: That *Enoch the ſeventh from Adam prophecied, ſaying; Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thouſands of his Saints.* God will not onely come to judgement himſelfe, but he will come attended with all his Saints, even with all the godly, *to execute vengeance upon all the world.* So our Saviour told Saint *Peter*, and not onely him, but all that follow him in the regeneration: *They ſhall ſit on thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Iſrael.* Mat. 9. 18. *They ſhall judge the Nations, and have dominion over the people*, Wiſd. 3. 8.

And now becauſe doubt is the beſt way to attaine unto knowledge, let me anſwer a doubt, that may creepe in by the way; How ſhall the Saints judge the world?

Anſ. Not by pronouncing of judgement upon the world, for that Chriſt alone ſhall doe: *Then ſhall the King ſay to them on his left hand, Depart yee curſed*, Mat. 25. But the Saints ſhall judge the world theſe foure wayes:

1. 1. They ſhall judge the world, by their conſent unto Chriſts judgement. God traines up his children in this world, & educates them, and teacheth them

them how they may judge the world hereafter; he teacheth them in this life how to assent with his proceedings in the world; so that they are able to say, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and just are thy judgements*, Psal. 119. 137. Now if the Saints be trained in this life to assent unto Gods proceedings with the world, much more then will they be able to know and consent unto Christs judgement, when he shall come with his Saints to judge the world: Now the Law saith, that consenters are agents: and therefore because the Saints shall consent to the judgement of Christ, therefore they are said to judge the world.

2. The Saints shall judge the world by their applause of Christs judgement: they shall not only give consent unto the judgement of Christ, but they shall also applaud it and commend it: when God shall say to all drunkards, swearers, lyers, Sabbath-breakers, and to all unbeleeving, impenitent, and graceles sinners, *Depart yee cursed into hell fire*, then though it were his owne father that begate him, or his mother that bare him, though it were his owne brother or sister, wife or childe, that hath been as deare as his own life and soule to him; yet they shall clap their hands for joy, and applaud the most righteous sentence of God upon them; and they shall sing *Hallelujah, salvation, and honour, and power, be to the Lord our God for true & righteous are his judgements*, Rev. 19. 1, 2. Let them goe accursed as they are; for it is a righteous sentence passed on them. 2.

3. They ſhall judge the world by their Majeſtie; they ſhall not onely ſtand againſt the wicked, and conſent to, and applaud that ſentence that Chriſt ſhall paſſe againſt the wicked, but they ſhall be inveſted with robes of majeſtie, and with a diademe of glory: then ſhall the righteous ſhine as the ſtarres in the firmament, and the wicked ſhall be amazed and aſtoniſhed at the ſight of them: as you may read in that platforme of judgement, *Matth.* 25. where Chriſt ſets his Saints over againſt the world, that ſo the world may look upon them, and be confounded at their ſight.

4. They judge the world by their lives and converſations; (as *Ambroſe* ſaith rightly) then is the world judged by them, when as the courſes and manners of the world are not found upon them: Therefore it is a pretty obſervation of *Hilary* (if it be the meaning of the Text) (I will not ſay it is) upon the 2 *Pſalme*; *Be wiſe yee Judges*: God hath appointed you to be Judges, to ſit on his bench with his Sonne; learne then to be wiſe, get to be indued with ſpirituall wiſdome and underſtanding, and to ſhine in all integritie and righteouſneſſe; and then turning his ſpeech to the wicked, he ſay's, *Kiſſe the Sonne leſt he be angry*. However it be, yet this is a truth, that by the lives of his Saints, he will judge the world; their faith ſhall judge the worlds infidelitie; their repentance ſhall judge the worlds impenitency; their accepting of, and taking the Lord Jeſus, ſhall judge their rejection and neglect of Chriſt

Chriſt Jeſus; their zeale ſhall judge the worlds lukewarmneſſe, and their holineſſe ſhall judge the worlds prophaneneſſe.

1. Becauſe of the myſtical union that is betwixt Chriſt and his Saints; He is the head, and they are his members; now that which the head doth, we aſcribe to the whole body; when the head ſpeakes, the whole body ſpeakes; when the head ſees, the whole body ſees: ſo when Chriſt judgeth the world, the whole body of Chriſt may truly be ſaid to judge the world. *As much as you did it unto one of theſe* (ſaith Chriſt) *you did it unto me:* ſo in as much as Chriſt paſſeth ſentence, even all the members of the myſticall body of Chriſt judge with him. *Reaſ. 1.*

Secondly, in regard of compaſſion: I ſpeake not of the word [compaſſion] as it ſignifies [pitie] but of compaſſion of ſuffering with Chriſt, ſeeing that Chriſt was reproched, contemned, hated, miſuſed, and condemned by the world, the Saints are likewiſe with him; ſeeing they partake of the afflictions, humiliations, and debaſements of Chriſt here, they ſhall alſo be made partakers with Chriſt in his glory. Here the wicked judge the Saints, and call them hypocrites, and diſſemblers, and laugh and ſcoffe at them, and wonder at them, as the Prophet brings in Chriſt ſpeaking, Eſay 8. Behold, *I and the children that thou haſt given me, are for ſignes and wonders in Iſrael:* The wicked count them for wonders and monſters in the world, judging them hypocrites and liers, which have nothing in them but rotten- *Reaſ. 2.*

neſſe and diſſimulation. Now the rule of like for like ſhall take place here, and as they were judged by the world, ſo they ſhall be Judges of the world.

Reaſ. 3. Thirdly, for the greater terror to all wicked men at the day of judgment: for as it is with a thiefe, not onely when the Judge ſhall command to hang him, but all the Juſtices, and all the Countrey ſhall cry out, Hang him, hang him, he is judged the more terribly; ſo God will not only ſay of all wicked and ungodly ſinners, Damne them, damne them, but he will have all the Saints in heaven, and all the Saints on earth to cry out, Away with them, away with them, let them be damned, *Pſal.* 50. 4. 5. This will make their judgment ſo much the more terrible.

Reaſon 4 Fourthly, the Saints ſhall judge the world, becauſe God will ſo convince them, that their mouthes ſhall be ſtopped, they ſhall have never a ſyllable to excuſe themſelves withall, when they ſhall ſee men fleſh and blood as themſelves are, when they ſhall ſee men and women, that have lived in the ſame towne, enjoyed the ſame ordinance of God, lived in the ſame family, that did partake of the ſame bleſſings, and of the ſame croſſes and afflictions with themſelves, ſubject alſo to the ſame corruptions and ſinnes as themſelves, when they ſhall ſee theſe at Chriſts right hand, they ſhall have never a word to excuſe themſelves withall: As when the Apoſtles had healed the creeple (*Acts* 3.) if the people had judged them for wicked and peſtilent men, the creeple

creeple would have convinced them, and ſhewed that they were of God; if they ſhould have cried, Root them out, the creeple would have condemned them, and told them, that they did good. And when the wicked ſhould ſee the Saints at Gods right hand, would they call them hypocrites and diſſemblers? they themſelves ſhall ſee, that they are ſincere; will they call them Puritans? why, they ſhall then ſee that their purity ſtands them in good ſtead: then *the ungodly ſhall not ſtand in judgement, nor the ſinners in the congregation of the righteous*, Pſal. 1. 6. Thus the point is cleare.

The firſt uſe then is for inſtruction, whereby we may learn, that the Saints by their now being Saints, doe now judge the world: if by the lives of Saints then God doth judge the world, then there is never a Saint in a towne, or Citie, or Pariſh in all the countrey, but he judgeth all the wicked that are about him: How? By living godly, by hating the ſinnes of the times, by keeping his or their garments clean from the pollution of the world: For by doing this, he judgeth the world. See it in *Noah*, *Heb.* 11. 7. *By faith Noah being warned of God, as yet moved with feare, prepared an Ark for the ſaving of his houſe, by which he condemned the world.* *Vſe* 1.

But ſome men will ſay, Could *Noah* be ſaid to condemne the world, by making the Ark? All the world did not ſee him when he did it. *Obj.*

Beloved, *Noahs* making the Ark an hundred and twenty years, though it was not ſeen of all *Anſ.*

yet all the world muſt needs heare of it, it being ſuch a ſtrange thing. Now hee condemned the world, in that the whole world did not come unto *Noah*, to enquire of him in ſober ſadneſſe, and not to have mockt him as they did; they thought him to be a peeviſh melancholy man, and not well in his wits, and ſo ſcoft at him, ſaying, Will he make an Ark to ſwim upon dry land? whereas they ſhould have asked him ſoberly, the cauſe why he did it, and if they had done ſo, *Noah* no queſtion would have told them, that the wrath of heaven was upon the world, and that the floods of Gods vengeance were ſhortly to bee poured down upon us: and becauſe my heart hath been naught, and I have ſinned and provoked the Lords wrath, I feare if I get not into this Ark which the Lord hath comanded me for to make, I ſhal periſh. Now becauſe they would not come unto *Noah* to ask him this reaſon, therefore the world was coudemned by him: even ſo the Saints, by making an Ark for their poore ſoules, even by getting into Chriſt, (as the Ark was a type of Chriſt without whom none can be ſaved) the Saints, I ſay, by getting into Chriſt, do judge the whole world, when they heare there be men that be no ſwearers, and no drunkards, and that there be men that wi l pray, read, heare the word, conferre of God and of Chriſt, and that weep and mourn for their ſinnes, that ſpend their times in the mortification of their luſts, and endevour after holineſſe and ſanctification; the whole world, I ſay, is judged by them. How? why

why, they should say: Sirs, what is the matter that you doe so run after Sermons? that you keep such a stirre about getting faith and repentance more then other men? that you pray, weep, fast and mourn, and are so strict in your workes? If thus men would but come unto Gods Saints, and ask them the reason of all these things, the Saints of God would tell them, that the wrath of God would come upon them if they did not doe thus: they could never be saved, if they did not thus beleeve, and thus repent, and thus pray, and walke thus holily and precisely, they should be all damned. But the world it falls a mocking and a scoffing at them, and never seekes to prevent the wrath of God; but it suddenly seiseth on them to their destruction.

Secondly, this teacheth us, that when there is any one sinner converted from the wickednesse of his wayes, and is become a Saint, then all the world may know, that there is a new Judge come to sit upon them. Seest thou a drunkard, a swearer, a prophane person converted from his sinnes, and now walkes soberly, holily, and purely; seest thou a man and a woman struck at a Sermon? Then know that unlesse thou commest out of thy sinnes, unlesse thou doest repent, and walk holily, there is a new Judge added to the rest, that shall judge thee. As our Saviour told the Pharisees, *If I through Beelzebub cast out Devils, by whom doe your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges*, Matth. 12. 27. where Christ tells them, that their children

2.

who

who were his Disciples (for some of the Pharisees children did beleeve in Christ and follow him, and had power from Christ to doe the same workes that Christ did;) Now they liked it well enough in their owne children, but they could not endure it in Christ: and therfore hee tells them, that their children, whom God had converted, and to whom he had given power to doe the same workes that he did, even they shall bee their Judges to condemne them: And even so may it be with thee, thou that art a father or a mother, God having converted any of thine own children, that child shall be thy Iudge and condemne thee, if thou repent not. It may be God hath converted thy brother and sister, and thou art not converted; thy own brother and sister shall condemne thee, if thou doe not repent and come out of thy sinnes.

3. Thirdly, we may learn that it concerns all the world to take notice of every grace in Gods children. There is never a grace of God in any of his Saints, but it shall condemne the world if it be void of it. The wayes of the Lord are all judgements, because they judge them that will not walk in them. Every grace, yea the very thoughts of the righteous are called *Judgements* by *Solomon*, *Prov.* 12. You may know a crooked thing by laying it to a straight line, and by that it is judged to be crooked: so the thoughts of the righteous which are right, holy and pure, shall judge the impure, unholy, and crooked thoughts of wicked men. Is the child of God humble

humble? His humility shall judge thy pride. Is the child of God meek and patient in suffering of wrong and injuries? His meekness and patience shall judge thy choler and revenge. Hath the child of God faith given him to beleeve in the Lord Jesus? His faith shall judge thy infidelity. Hath the child of God the Spirit of prayer given him? It shall condemne thee that praiest only with thine own spirit. Hath he zeal? His zeale shall judge thy luke-warmnesse. Doth his speech and communication administer grace to the hearers? It shall condemne thee that speakest of vain and idle things. Yea, all the actions of the godly shall judge the wicked: and hence the Saints are said *to doe Gods judgements*, Zeph. 2. 3. that is, they doe according to Gods judgements whereby he will judge the world: Thus they that doe mourne, doe judge them that doe not mourne: they that bewail their wickednesse, and the sinnes of the times, judge them that doe not: they that fast, weep, pray, and humble themselves for the miseries of the Church in these dreadful dayes, they judge them that make no good conscience of their duties.

Fourthly, learne hence, that all the Texts of Scripture, all the whole word of God, that is it that begets these Saints, and therefore they must needs judge the world: the word of God begets mens hearts unto sanctification and holinesse, whereby they become Saints: and therefore if they, then much more shall the Word it selfe judge the world: and hence it is that all the words 4.

words of God in the Scripture, are called *Judgements*, Pſal. 105. 5. And our Saviour ſaith, *The word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge you in the laſt day*, Joh. 12. 48. *The word that I have ſpoken*, where mark, he doth not ſay, *The word which you have heard*: No, there are many ſwearers, and drunkards, and prophane ungodly wretches, that will not come to Church to hear the word; there are many wicked men, and dead hearted worldlings, and rotten livers, that will not bee brought to heare Gods Word; it may bee at this preſent there is many whoremongers, drunkards, and wicked perſons, that wallow in their filthineſſe; in the Ale-houſe, Game-houſe, or Drab-houſe; or in the fields, or beds, or at their ſports. Well, this Word that is now a preaching, whether they will hear it or no, ſhall judge them at the laſt day. Now all the wicked in *Aſhford*, that heare the word of God calling upon them to repent, and to come out of their ſinnes, but will not, or out of contempt of Gods word, will abſent themſelves from it; this word ſhall judge and condemne them. There is never a drunkard, ſwearer, or prophane perſon, though his pew be empty, but this word of God that denounceth the eternall wrath and vengeance of God upon them, if they come not out of their ſinnes, this word ſhall riſe up in judgement againſt them, and condemne them eternally. Oh that they could but hear it! but the word that I have ſpoken ſhall judge you, whether you heare it or not.

Fifth-

Fifthly and lastly, hence it follows, that all 5.
Ministers of God shall also judge the world.
me of man (saith God to the Prophet *Ezekiel*)
t thou judge the bloody City? Yea, thou shalt
w her all her abominations, Ezek. 22. 2. As if he
uld have said, Sonne of man, they are drun-
rds, wilt thou not tell them of it? They are
oremasters, wilt thou not tell them of it?
ey are filthy idolaters, wilt thou not tell them
it? They live in their sinnes, and in their a-
minations, and wilt thou not tell them of it?
me of man, tell them of all their abominati-
, and tell them that they shall goe to hell, if
y repent not, tell them that they are damned
if they goe on, and come not out of their
ces: *Wilt thou not judge them* (*son of Man?*)
loved, there is never a Minister in *England*,
ever a Sermon that is preached by them, but
dgeth every Parish, and every man & woman
the congregation, that doe not labour to doe
at is commanded them, and leave undone
at is forbidden them: I say it judgeth them, or
e it is a judgment unto them.

This then serves to condemne three sorts of *Use 2.*
ings in the world: First, shall the Saints judge
e world, that see not amiableness in their
ces? All the countrey doth reverence the face
the Judge when he rides circuit; Let the Judge
me into the Countrey, and all the Knights,
fices, and Gentlemen in the Countrey will goe
t to meet him, and bow unto him; yet these
dges are but Judges of a few rogues, male-
factors,

factors and peasants of the Countrey: Alas, they are far from the dignitie of the Saints; for the Saints shall judge Saints and Angels: all the world, Kings and Queenes, Lords and Nobles, and Captaines of the earth, the poorest Saint in Christendome shall judge them. The Apostle, or rather our Saviour saith, *To him that overcometh, and keepeth my words untill the end, to him will I give power over the Nations*, Rev. 2. 26. Whatsoever he be, if he doe the workes of Christ, and walke in the Ordinances of Christ, shall have power over the Nations, not onely to contemne their pomps and vanities, their lusts and corruptions, but also to convince their consciences, and to condemne their soules for ever.

2. 2. Shall the Saints judge the world? Then what fooles are the wicked that prepare not for these Judges? When the Judge comes to an Assise, all men prepare for him; the Constables make ready their Presentments, the Juries are warned, and the Clerkes make ready their Bils, &c. lest the Judge should clap a fine upon them: and shall the Saints be Judges, and dost thou not prepare thy heart by grace? Dost thou not get puritie and holinesse against that day? Surely, if thou dost not, the very Saints will judge thee unmeet for heaven, and fit onely to have thy portion in hell. When Christ said, *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne*, Rev. 3. 21. He addes, *Let him that hath an eare heare*: Will God make his Saints to judge the world? Then let all wicked men give eare and heare what

what God saith of his Church: The Saints shall judge the world: therefore let all men take notice of it, and prepare themselves for their judgement.

Lastly, It condemnes all those that doe not see glory and majesty in the faces of Gods Saints. There is majestie in the face of a Judge; yea a man may discover in them a kinde of a soveraigne majesty. Even so the Saints of God have a majesty in their courses, in their lookes, in their thoughts, and in all their wayes; and in all these they shall judge and condemne the wicked. The wicked may give the Saints nick-names and scorne, flout, contemne, and deride them now in this life, but let me tell them, that how lightly soever they esteeme of them, they shall be their Judges: They may cry out against the Saints, as long since the wicked *Sodomites* did against good *Lot*, Gen. 19. 9. *This fellow* (say they) *will be our Judge*: Why, what had *Lot* done unto them? Alas, he did nothing, but when they would have done that Sodomish villany against the two Angels that came to him, *Lot* went to them and said, *I pray you my brethren, doe not so wickedly*. So let the godly be in the company of wicked men, that abuse the good creatures of God; say, I pray you my brethren, doe not so wickedly, be not drunkards, be not swearers; brethren, I pray you doe not so vainly, nor so prophanely use the name of God in your mouths; I pray you my brethren, doe not prophane Gods Sabbaths, doe not lye, doe not cheate, nor cozen; if you doe these and these

3.

these things, the wrath of God will plague us for it. Oh then presently they cry out, *Who made you our Judges?* As once the Hebrewes did of *Moses*, Act. 7. 39. Dost thou call Saints hypocrites and dissemblers, men that judge before the time? Thou foole, wert thou not as good to suffer the Saints to judge thee now, whereby thou mayst see thy wretchednesse and misery, and by faith and speedy repentance prevent that doome, which otherwise they tell thee will come upon thee, as hereafter, when if thou hast not repented, thou shalt never escape that doome and vengeance, to which the Saints shall judge thee? What, wilt thou not suffer them to call a drunkard, a drunkard? an adulterer, an adulterer? a blasphemer, a blasphemer? a carnall man, a carnall man? a worldly man, a worldly man?

It is a pretty observation out of *Cyprian*, that because Christ did reprove all sorts of religions, and spared none, he reproved the Scribes, the Pharisees, the Lawyers, the Souldiers, &c. and yet doth not reprove the Priests, because they were Judges of the people, not because he durst not, but he would not: If thou revilest the Saints, thou revilest thy Judges. Take heed then, how thou casts the least aspersion upon the Saints; doe not say, they are rash Iudges, uncharitable censurers, dissembling hypocrites; for they shall be your Iudges. O that the people would hearken & be admonished in time, to prevent this judgement. Our Saviour saith, that *this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men hate*

it,

it, Joh. 3. 19. But the children of God, whom God calls *the light of the world*, these lights are come into the world, and men *love darknesse more then the light*. How can the wicked escape damnation, that have so many thousand Judges to condemne them? If the malefactor that is indicted for murther, or felony, cannot escape condemnation, that hath but one Judge to sit upon him: thou that art a wicked man, living in thy sinnes without Christ, how canst thou escape, that hast so many millions of Saints to judge thee, yea from *Adam* the first, till the last Saint that shall be upon the earth? Surely the wicked shall never escape condemnation: for,

1. God the Father who judgeth by way of authoritie, he will condemne thee; all judgement cometh originally from him; he that hath often commanded thee to repent, and to come out of thy sinnes, he shall condemne thee, because thou hast not obeyed him. 1.

2. God the Sonne, he will judge thee, who judgeth by way of dispensation, *Act.* 10. First Christ preacheth to thee repentance and remission of sinnes, to which if thou yeeld not, then know, that there is a day appointed, wherein he will judge thee. That Saviour that thou sayest thou desirest, if thou part not with thy lusts, he himselfe will be thy Judge that will condemne thee. 2.

3. God the Holy Ghost will judge thee, that Spirit that now strives and wrestles with thee, that suggests good motions into thy heart, that 3.

puts thee in minde of repentance, bidding thee leave and forsake thy sinnes, and live holily: but if thou wilt not, this Spirit shall judge thee by way of conviction.

4. 4. The Word of God shall judge thee, and that by way of forme, it being the platforme, according unto which Christ will judge the whole world. Now suppose there be fortie prisoners in the Gaole together, one in for murther, another for theft, another for treason, (that man that knows the Law, if there be equitie and justice in the Assise) he, I say, that knows the Law, knows who shall be hanged, or quartered, or burned, or set free: even so, Beloved, that man that looks through the Scriptures, that reads this or that Chapter, this or that sentence, may know that or this man will to hell, if he repent not. Say I this of my selfe, or sayes not the Scripture as much? *The fearfull, and unbeleeving, and all that love and make lies, shall be cast into that lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever*, Rev. 21. 8. By this text will the Lord Iesus come and judge the world; and therefore as for all such as live and dye in their sinnes, wee may all know, that they shall be all damn'd in fire & brimstone for ever. Hereby I know that all they that make no conscience of *idle*, vain, and earthly speeches, and reproachfull words, they shall *give an account* for them by this Text, *Mat.* 12. 36. Doth the Scripture say, that *all the wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the Nations that forget God*? I know it shall be so by that text, *Psal.* 10. for all things

things shall be done according to the Scriptures. Rom. 2. 16. *In that day* (saith the Apostle) *when God shall judge the secrets of mens hearts by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel*; that is, just as Gods Ministers preach; just as you finde it written in the same Scriptures, so will he judge at that day.

Beloved, There is never a Text throughout the whole Scripture, that commands you to leave and forsake your sinnes, but it shall judge you, if you doe not: there is not one Text of Scripture, that commands performance of any holy duties, but it shall rise up in judgement against thee, if thou performe it not. Doth the Scripture say, *Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excesse? Eph.* 5. 18. It shall judge and condemne the drunkard that drinkes excessively. Doth the Scripture say, *Mortifie your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleannesse, inordinate affection, evill concupiscence, and covetousnesse, which is Idolatry?* Col. 3. 5. If notwithstanding these sinnes live in thee, this Text shall rise up and condemne thee to hell. Doth the text say, *That the fathers to the children shall make knowne Gods truth*, Esa. 28. 9. Eph. 6. 4. *Parents bring up your children in the nurture and information of the Lord?* It shall rise up in judgement and condemne those parents that have not instructed their children to feare God. Doth the text say, *Thou shalt teach the Word of God unto thy children, and that thou shalt talke of it when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou goest by the way, when thou*

lieſt downe, and when thou riſeſt up? Deut. 6. 7. It ſhall judge thee, becauſe thou makeſt no conſcience of holy conference. All theſe and the like Texts of Scripture, ſhall riſe up and ſtand in rank to condemne thee, that haſt not ſwayed thy heart, and framed thy life according to the Scriptures.

5. 5. All the Miniſters of God ſhall ſit as Iuſtices in common (from the firſt preacher of righteouſneſſe unto the laſt.) *Moſes* ſhall judge thee, *Joſhua, David, Eſay, Jeremy, Hoſea, Daniel, Paul, Peter, &c.* they ſhall all judge you: juſt as Gods Miniſters judge you here, ſo will God; he will take all their Sermons, and clap them upon the heads of all rebellious hearers, and ſo damn them for ever.

6. Laſtly, The Saints ſhall judge you; yea, all the Saints from one end of the world to the other, they ſhall aſſiſt the juſt Iudge of heaven & earth, and they ſhall be interpretive Iudges.

Beloved, how can the wicked eſcape condemnation, that have ſo many thouſands of Judges, ſo many thouſand exhortations and reproofes, ſo many thouſand admonitions and invitations, ſo many thouſand mercies & proffers of Chriſt? When God the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghoſt ſhall judge them, when heaven and all the Angels in heaven, and all the Saints on earth, ſhall judge them and condemne them? How canſt thou eſcape? Is there never a drunkard in this congregation? Is there never a ſwearer? never a prophane perſon? never a mocker? never

ver a railer in this towne, that refuseth to hearken to the word? The men of Niniveh shall rise up in judgement against them, and condemne them, because they still live in their sinnes, notwithstanding they have had not three dayes preaching, nor fourty dayes space onely for repentance, but many yeares of grace calling upon them. The Queen of Sheba shall condemne many that live in these sinnes, who went many hundred miles to heare the wisdome of *Solomon*, (for going and comming it was well-nigh two thousand miles) but you have the word of Christ preached in your eares, and saying, the Kingdom of God is come among you; but you will scarce step out of your dores to receive it, or take any paines for it. This one woman shall judge them. There will be no way for the wicked to put off their judgment: then the sonnes of *Eli* shall have none to advocate between God and them, none to cloke or cover their wickednesse; they shall then have no excuses for themselves: for would they excuse themselves? the Saints shall judge them: would they send out excuses? the Saints shall cut them off.

Would they in the first place say, Alas! I was ignorant, I knew not how to pray, or to read, or to meditate on the Scriptures, nor to catechize my family, I was dull and blockish to conceive such points as were taught me; and if I did live in sinne, it was ignorance that taught it me; I was never book-learned? Saith *Augustine*, this *Ignoramus* that was as ignorant and as little book-

book-learned as thou, he eschewed those sinnes that thou livest in, got the anointing of Gods Spirit to anoint his eyes, to see and know the things of God, which thou hast neglected to get; he shall condemne thee.

A second excuse is poverty: I have no means to live on; if I should run after Sermons, I should beg my bread: I have a great charge to keep, and nothing but my labour to maintain them; and therefore I cannot spare time for meditation; I have no while to study the Scriptures, to pray and to mourn for my sins, and to get grace. Well, the poore Gobler that lived next doore to Saint *Anthony*, shall rise up and condemn thee; hee was as poore as thou, and had as great a charge to keep as thou: yet hee mourned and wept, hee got grace, and hee set time apart for prayer, reading, meditation, holy conference; he shall judge and condemne thee.

Thirdly, they shall have no excuse by imployment, I am a servant, I am commanded to doe this or that, I find so much businesse to follow, that I cannot finde any time for such things. Another saith, I have great imployments, I have many Irons in the fire, and therefore God, I hope, will be mercifull unto me. Well then, *Cornelius* that had as many and as great imployments as thou, and *Eleazar* (*Abrahams* servant) who was a servant as well as thou, yet in as much as they walked with God, and waited upon him in his ordinances, they shall judge thee.

Fourth-

Fourthly, they shall have no excuse from their callings and trades, I am an Inne-keeper, and if I should not suffer drinking, and swearing, and gaming, I should not live. Another saith, I am a tradesman, & if I should ask at first just so much as I could take, I should never bring customers to my price, and so I should not live of my trade. Well, *Rahab* was an Inne-keeper, as well as thou, and yet she lived by faith, and did not suffer such wickedness in her house. So may a tradesman, that had the same trade, and the same imployment with thee, and as great a trade as thou, and yet have avoided these sinnes and evils that thou fallest into; they shall judge thee.

Fifthly, they shall have no excuse from the times they live in. Alas (saith one) I live in wretched times, all the world is given to sinne. Therefore if I should be so strict and precise in my wayes, if I should run after Sermons, pray, sing Psalmes, &c. all the world would be against me. There are no Professors of religion but are reproached and miscalled, I should lose all my friends, I should be hated and opposed; yea, it may be (the time being such) I should bee accused to Councels, and have my life questioned: there is nothing but disgrace and reproach, and persecution; wherefore I was afraid, and did dispense with my conscience. Ah wretch! shall that man that lived in those wicked times in the same town with thee, that had the same hatred and reproach that thou wast afraid of, that hath

endured all the rebukes of Christ that thou wast ashamed of, yet he went on, and continued unto the end; he shall judge thee.

Use 3. The use is for the just reproof of many of the Saints of God, because they are not so circumspect and watchfull over their wayes, as they ought. *Dost thou judge others* (saith the Apostle) *and yet dost the same things thy selfe?* Rom. 2, 2. So may I say to all such, Will you give way to sinne? will you suffer your lusts and corruptions to sway you, and not endevour to root out or kill them rather? How wilt thou then judge the world? How wilt thou then be able to rise up in judgement against the wicked, to judge them for such sinnes wherein thou allowest and livest thy selfe? Surely God will never account thee for a Saint, if he cannot judge the world by thee. Oh this should rent the heart and bowels of those that goe for Christians, that goe for Saints, yet live not as the Saints should live. If God cannot take thee, and judge the world by thee; if he cannot take thy life, and judge the life of all Pagans, Infidels all luke-warm, earthly, and secure sinners, he will not account thee for a Saint. This then first condemnes all unholinesse in the lives of them that be Saints. Beloved, if wee did but live like the Saints of God in holinesse and purity in the wayes of God, the Lord would put such splendor and glory upon us, that would even daunt the very face of our enemies, and make them stand amazed at Saints. But it is the contrary with us, the glory of God

is

is departed from us, Spain, France, and other Nations feare us not: Why? The righteousneſſe and purity of Religion is departed from us. For you ſhall have a Saint come into the company of a wicked man, and yet the ſwearer will not be afraid to ſweare before him: the drunkard will not be afraid to be drunk before him: the filthy ſpeaker will not be afraid to utter rotten ſpeeches before him: the lier will not be afraid to lie before him: the worldly man will not be afraid to diſcover his vanities before him by his carnall and filthy conference. Beloved, all this is, becauſe the Saints have loſt their glory; if they did live as Saints ought to live, the wicked would tremble to work wickednesſe before them. Though a wicked man be a drunkard, and abuſe the good creatures of God when no Saint is in his company, yet if a Saint were preſent, he would tremble, and not dare to doe it. Though he were a ſwearer, a filthy talker, a vain worldling amongſt his companions; yet if hee come in the Saints company, and the Saints ſtand in Gods counſell, then would the wicked tremble and quake to doe ſuch things: then would they lick in their tongues, and not dare to ſpeake ſuch blaſphemous oathes, ſuch vain and unprofitable words, filthy lies and ſlanders. It is ſaid of thoſe that gladly received the Apoſtles words, and were added to the Church, that *the feare of them came upon the world*, Acts 2. 41. What, did the Diſciples goe with ſwords and guns, &c. to keep men in aw thereby?

by? No, *they continued in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship*, and did live according thereto, and this made all the world afraid of them.

Secondly, this condemnes the little difference that is betwixt the wicked of the world, and some Saints in their lives and manners: Beloved, is there so little difference between the Judge and the prisoners, that any one need to come and say, I pray you Sir, shew me which is the Judge, and which is the malefactor? Is there not a plain difference both in the apparell and carriage? The one is in rich apparell, and the other in stinking and filthy cloathes, having his hands manicled, or his legges chained. But it is to be feared, that many of the Saints have neglected holinesse and purity in their carriage and actions which they performe, that one can hardly tell which is a Saint, and which is a reprobate. If a man deale with a Saint, and deale with a wicked man, hee seeth no difference between them. Let a Saint doe any action, either pray, heare, or conferre, let a wicked man do the like, there is such deadnes, such carnality, such worldly-mindednesse, such luke-warmnesse of affection, that one can hardly tell which is the Saint and which is the hypocrite. Beloved, if the Saints did live like Saints, there would bee as plaine a difference between a Saint and a wicked man, in in their lives and behaviour, as is betwixt the Judge and the Rogue that is to bee judged by him. *Hast thou not considered my servant Job*, (saith God) *how that there is none like him in all the earth?*

earth? Job 1. 4. 8. If a man come to be a Saint indeed, there is never a wicked man in the town and countrey, that lives and doth as he doth, and walkes as he walks, nor prayes as he prayes, nor heares the word as he hears it, nor that conferres or meditates as hee doth, that beleeves and repents as hee doth, that strives against his lusts as he doth: there is none like him in all the world.

Thirdly, it condemnes the scandalousnesse of many Professors in their behaviours and actions. Oh! how do wicked men insult and exclaim hereupon, to see a Professor led away and overcome by some lust! What (say they) are these they that are led by the Spirit of God? Are these your devout men? why, they can covet and scrape as wel as others; they can cousen and lie as wel as others. I, those that are your great Professors, and hot-spurres, they are as covetous, as worldly, as cruel, as others, though they wil not bee drunk, nor sweare, yet they wil cousen and lie, as wel as others. The consideration whereof made the Prophets heart to bleed in him, and to pray, Oh purge me from my murder and adultery, and all other my secret sinnes, lest I cast mire and dirt in the faces of thy children, causing them to beare the reproaches of my sinnes. *Oh let not those that seeke thee, bee ashamed for my sake,* Psa. 69. For thy sake that livest scandalously and offensively, for thy sake that livest covetously and scraping after the world, that art so unjust in thy dealings and promises, mire and dirt,

dirt, ſcandals and reproaches are caſt upon the children. For thy looſneſſe, yea for thy carnall liberty it is that the true profeſſors of Religion are reproached, ſuſpected, and hardly cenſured in the world. What did *Jacob* when he was to walk with the people of the land? *Gen.* 35. 5. 6. he purged his houſe, and (ſaith the text) *the terror of God was upon all the Cities*, he made them all to tremble at him. I tell you, all the wicked in *Aſhford* would tremble at the Profeſſors that live therein, if they did live and carry themſelves like Saints indeed. Oh if all thoſe that did profeſſe themſelves to be Chriſtians, were Chriſtians indeed; and that profeſſe themſelves to bee Saints, were Saints indeed, living in the power and ſanctification of holineſſe; then men would ſay of themſelves, of a truth God is in theſe men, Chriſt dwels in them, and the Spirit of God leads and governs them indeed. If thou wouldſt judge the world, take heed ſo as the world judgeth thee, and ſo thou with the world bee condemned eternally. It is ſaid that *Herod feared John, becauſe he was a juſt man*, *Mark.* 6. 23. So, if all thy neighbours did know, that thou wert a juſt man, a holy and conſcionable man in all thy wayes, & in all thy actions, and that cannot indure ſwearing, lying, and deceit; but did ſee that thou waſt juſt, and one that feared God truly, they would all feare thee.

THE PUNISHMENT OF

Vnworthy Communicants at the Table of the LORD:

DELIVERED
In a SERMON preached,
Decemb. 7. 1628.

By that vigilant and painfull Miniſter of the Word,
WILLIAM FENNER, B. D.
Sometimes fellow of *Pembroke Hall* in *Cambridge*, and late Parſon of *Rochford* in *Eſſex*.

London printed by *M. S.* for *I. S.*

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A SERMON OF

Mr. WILLIAM FENNERS,

upon this following Text.

1 Cor. 11. 30.

For this cause many are weake and sicke among you, and many sleepe.

THE Apostle in this Chapter taxeth two abuses which were then amongst the *Corinthians*: first, the unseemly habit of women in the Congregation, from the first verse to the 17. Secondly, the prophane usage of the holy Communion, both of men and women, from the 17. verse to the end of the Chapter: And herein, from the 22. verse to the end of the 25. he sets downe the Institution of the Lords Supper; and thence raiseth a point of Doctrine:

That whosoever would come to this holy Communion, they must examine themselves, that *Doct.* 1.

that ſo they may come worthily; elſe it were better that they never came.

So we reade in the 28. verſe; *But let a man examine himſelfe, and ſo let him eat of that Bread and drinke of that Cup:* As if the Apoſtle had ſaid, Unleſſe a man examine himſelfe, and ſearch his own heart, and find out his ſinnes, and dive into the ſecrets of his ſoule, to bring out his hidden corruptions, confeſſing them and judging himſelfe for them before the Lord, let him never preſume to come unto this holy Sacrament.

And then he proves it by three Reaſons.

Reaſ. 1. The firſt is taken from the end of the Sacrament; for it is the remembrance of the death and paſſion of Chriſt; ſo it is in the 26. verſe, *So oft as you eat of this Bread and drinke of this Cup, you ſhew forth the Lords death till he come.* It is a reaſon that the men of this world are not acquainted withall; and therefore it was a good wish of a reverend Father, that the Sacrament ſhould never be miniſtred, but there ſhould be a Sermon, to teach men the nature of it, and to inſtruct them in the myſtery thereof. Wee approach unto the Sacrament hand over head, living in our ſinnes, not ſhewing by our comming that Chriſt is dead; we ſay, and we profeſſe that Chriſt died for our ſinnes, and yet notwithſtanding our ſinnes live in us, as if Chriſt had not died for us, or as if we would proclaime, that his death hath had no effect in us. For were we dead with Chriſt, then ſinand the living occaſions of ſinne, would be dead in us alſo. My Beloved, we

ſhould

ſhould never come to this Sacrament, but we ſhould ſhew forth the Lords death thereby, that is, that Chriſt is dead (or, rather died) for ſinne, and that ſinne is alſo dead in us.

The ſecond Reaſon is taken from the damned wrong wee offer unto Chriſt, if we come in our ſinnes, for we are *guilty of the body and bloud of Chriſt*, as it is in the 27. verſe; nay, thou ſinneſt againſt the Lord Ieſus Chriſt not a jot leſſe, then *Pilat* that condemned him, then *Judas* that betrayed him, and the *Jewes* that cryed out, *Crucifie him, crucifie him*; yea, thou art as much guilty, as if thy own hand in thy own perſon had been imbrued in his bloud. Now we know it is a horrible ſin to be guilty of the bloud and murther of an ordinary man, yea of a very rogue; how much more is it a great and fearfull ſin to be guilty of the body and bloud of the Lord Ieſus Chriſt, the onely and eternall Son of God? yet comeſt thou to this holy Communion, and thou bringeſt no leſſe then the guilt of the body and bloud of Chriſt upon thy ſoule? *Reaſ. 2.*

The third Reaſon is taken from the wofull wrong and injury that man brings upon his own ſoule, that comes unpreparedly without examination of himſelfe; in the 20. verſe, *he eateth and drinketh his own damnation*; that is, he maketh himſelfe guilty of, and liable to the ſame vengeance that the crucifiers of Chriſt had inflicted on them, *Good had it been for that man* (ſaith Chriſt of *Judas*) *if that he had never been borne*: So may I ſay, Good had it been for that man and that wo- *Reaſon 3.*

man, if they had never been born, who come unworthily unto the Table of the Lord; for when they eate of that bread, they eate their owne bane; and when they drinke of that Cup, they drinke their own damnation.

Vse 1. Then cometh he to make some uses of this point; and first he condemns those that as they come, so they goe away from the Sacrament, no more holy, no more gracious then before; but as they come in their sins, so they goe away in their sins; they came drunkards, and they goe away drunkards; they came worldlings, and they goe away worldlings; they came mockers, and they goe away mockers; they came in their wrath, anger, malice, deadnesse, hypocrisie, and lukewarmnesse, and so they goe away, still never the better, but living in them as they did before: As in the 17. verse, *You come together* (saith the Apostle) *not for the better, but for the worse*: Whereas if they would have come worthily, they should have gone away the better, they should have received more grace and holinesse to walke with God, more power and strength against sin and corruption; yea, the Lord would have ratified and confirmed his Covenant with them; whereas living in contention, and not coming with preparation, they grow the worse by the Sacrament. The *Corinthians* thought, that the Apostle would have praised them for their coming to Church, and receiving the Sacrament: *Shall I praise you? in this* (saith the Apostle) *I praise you not.*

Secondly,

Secondly, He makes an uſe of terror againſt all thoſe that dare come in their ſinnes unto this holy Sacrament of the Lord; for that man that commeth in his ſinnes unto the Table of the Lord, though he may think he receives the communion, yet he doth not; for this is not the Table of the Lord, but the Table of Devils. It is true, thou receiveſt the Sacrament of the body and bloud of Chriſt; but yet comming in thy ſinnes, thou receiveſt not his body and bloud, as of a Saviour, to ſave thee from thy ſinnes: Indeed thou receiveſt the body and bloud of Chriſt ſacramentally; but it is as thy Iudge to condemne thee unto the pit of deſtruction, for thy damned impudency in coming ſo unworthily unto this holy Sacrament. For that man cannot eate the body of Chriſt, that is not a member of Chriſt; therefore thou muſt be a limbe of Chriſt, if ever thou wilt receive worthily. *Uſe 2.*

2. If a man come unto the Sacrament, and come in his ſinnes, he cometh to his own deſtruction: for though it be a ſweet banquet for to refreſh an humble and weary ſoule, and to make it walk more cheerfully in the wayes of God all the dayes of his life: yet he that commeth unto it in his ſinnes, and receiveth it in his uncleanneſſe, ſpeedeth thereby his own damnation, and receiveth it as his *viaticum* to hell The Apoſtle compares *Baptiſme* to the *red Sea*, 1 Cor. 10. from which place *Chryſoſtome* ſaith, that as the red Sea was a way for the Iſraelites to paſſe through to Canaan, ſo it was as a grave to

wallow up th Egyptians to their destruction: So the Lords Supper is as a grave or open pit whereby many plunge themselves into eternall destruction, but as a chariot to the godly to carry them to heaven.

Use 3. Thirdly, by comming in thy sinnes, thou makest thy selfe liable to Gods temporary plagues and judgements; as appeares in my Text, *For this cause many are sick and weak among you, and many are fallen asleep.* [For this cause] which is not onely a note of conclusion, but of the cause: *For this cause*, namely, because they examine not themselves, but come in their sinnes, and receive it unworthily. One man hath a disease in his body, that he liveth not out halfe his dayes; another sick and weak neer unto death; a third is fallen asleep. Wherefore? why (saith the Apostle) for this cause of receiving unworthily the Sacrament of the Lords Supper.

Use 4. Fourthly, for instruction, that because the people of God as well as wicked men, are guilty of unworthy comming to the Lords Table, therefore he exhorts them, that if they would not have the Lord judge them, that they would judge themselves, as in the 31. verse. *For if wee would judge our selves, we should not be judged of the Lord.* If wee would sit downe and search our own hearts, and try our owne spirits, and pry into our bosomes, and out with our old corruptions, and unclean lusts, and enter into a new covenant with God, of holy walking before him for after time, if we would thus judge and con-

condemne our ſelves, and mortifie our ſinnes, comming with grace unto this holy banquet, then wee might come with comfort unto this bleſſed Sacrament, aſſuring our ſelves that wee ſhall eſcape the judgment of the Lord. For thoſe of the Corinthians whom God ſtruck with ſickneſſe, weakneſſe, and death, it was to inſtruct others that are well and in health, that they venture not to enter upon theſe holy myſteries with unholy hearts, and unclean hands.

Fifthly, he concludeth with a uſe of exhortation in the 33. and 34. verſes: *Wherefore brethren, when ye come together to partake of the holy Communion, tarry one for another*: As if he ſhould have ſaid, Away with all your diſorders, and come not with a temporal, but with a ſpiritual appetite; provide not thy teeth, but thy heart for theſe dainties: for this is not a feaſt for the body, for the ſoul, therfore away with all your diſorders & unſeemly coming unto this bleſſed Sacrament, take heed and repent of this ſinne among you, and of all other ſins which you know your own conſciences to be guilty of, and ſo come unto this holy communion. *Vſe 5.*

Now the verſe that I have read to you, is a part of that uſe of terror which the Apoſtle makes againſt the unworthy receivers of the Sacrament; and it contains Gods ſevere hand and judgment againſt thoſe that come unworthily: wherein note three things.

Firſt, the cauſe of their puniſhment, which is the unworthy eating of the Communion: *For*

this cause many are sick and weak among you, and many are fallen asleep.

2. Secondly, the punishment inflicted for this sinne, *weaknesse*, *sickenesse*, and *mortality*: For it seems (saith *Peter Martyr*) that the Lord sent a sore plague and pestilence among them for to revenge himselfe of them for their abuse of the Sacrament, for this cause.

3. Thirdly, there is the delinquents, which are you Corinthians: *Many are sick and weak among you*, and in them all others that come unpreparedly to the Sacrament.

Chrysostome notes here, that our Apostle doth not fetch here an Argument or example of judgment from others, as he had done in the former chapter, but he brings it from themselves, who sensibly felt the wrath of God upon them for this very sinne; As if the Apostle should have said, How is it, O Corinthians, that you dare venture to come unto the Communion so unpreparedly, and that you have no more regard of so weighty a businesse as is the receiving of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ? See you not the wrath of God upon your dwellings, and the curse of heaven to take hold of your towne? you see it this very time, that some are weak and very sick amongst you, neer unto death, and others have been struck with death before your eyes, and the wrath of God is not removed, but lies yet upon you: What will you alwayes goe on, and never cease to provoke the Lord to indignation and wrath against you for your sinnes, untill

untill his jealousie hath utterly consumed you, and clean cut you off? And howsoever many of you may think that this sickness, weakness, and mortality comes upon you by chance, as from the infection of the aire, or other secondary causes, I tell you nay, but it is for this cause onely, even your unworthy comming to the Supper of the Lord. Whence we may observe this point of instruction:

That God doth most severely punish the unworthy receivers of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper. *Doct. 2.*

He punished the Corinthians here with sickness, weakness, feavers, pestilence, death temporal, and God knowes how many with death eternal. *Theodoret* observes, that the Apostle told them of a thing that was acted amongst them: for if hee had told them of such judgements as had been hid from them, and not manifest before their eyes, as if they had not felt the sickness in their bodies, and heard the bels tolling daily in their ears, they might have thought that the Apostle had but lied unto them. So the people of Israel, as wee may read in 1 Cor. 1. 2. 3. verses, *they were baptized in the Cloud and in the Sea, and they did all eat the same spirituall meat, and drink the same spirituall drinke*; yet as it is in the fifth verse, *with many of them God was not well pleased*. Nay, God was so wroth with them, that within the space of fourty yeares, many thousands of them were destroyed by death here, and God knoweth how many thousands of them in

hell. For God speaketh of hell, as well as of death, and their sinne was so great, that it made God confirme it with *an oath*, that they should *never enter into his rest*. And Saint *Cyprian* saith, that the Lord hath shewed many miracles, and declared many fearfull judgments upon the unworthy receivers of the Sacrament.

Judas, who *Ambrose* thought received the Sacrament (though *Hilary* and others that he did not, but onely that he did eate the Passeover, and was comming to this Sacrament also) but see his doome, *Joh.* 13. as soon as ever hee received the sop, *the Devill entred into him*, and so it is with all such as come to the communion in their sinnes without repentance, and unfained resolution of walking ever after worthy of the Sacrament; I say unto all and every one of them, that as soon as ever thou receivest the bread and wine into thy mouth, thou receivest the Devill together with it; as soon as ever it goeth down into thy body, the Devill goeth after it, and taketh more full possession of thy heart and soule.

Reas. 1. Now the reason why the Lord doth so severely punish both with temporall judgments, and with spirituall curses, the unworthy receivers of the Sacrament, is, in regard of the authour of the Sacrament, who is Christ: and that not onely as he was man, (as the Papists would make us beleeve) but Christ as he was God did institute the same. So saith the Apostle in the 23. verse, *The Lord Jesus Christ in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread and brake it, when he had given thanks,*

hanks, and ſaid, Take yee, and eat yee, for this is my body which is broken for you. Now if the Lord Jeſus did inſtitute it, what a curſed thing is it for any to defile it, and ſo ſin againſt Chriſt? It is a damnable thing to ſinne againſt God, but to ſin againſt God, as he is God in Chriſt, is damnably damnable. The holy Ghoſt in the ſecond Pſalm exhorts *to kiſſ the Sonne leſt he be angry, and ſo thou periſh*: As if he ſhould ſay, Adore the Sonne, Adore the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and ſo come and eate of this bread, and drink of this cup: for if he be angry, thou wilt ſurely periſh; and if thou ſin againſt God, and ſo goe out of the way, Chriſt upon thy repentance will ſet thee in again; but if thou ſinneſt againſt God in Chriſt, who is the Way, the Life, and the Truth, thou ſhalt ſurely periſh from the right way: for there is no other way for to bring thee in again, *Acts* 4.12. Therefore woefull is thy caſe, and miſerable is thy condition if thou ſinneſt againſt Chriſt, prophaning his holy ordinances, which he himſelfe hath inſtituted, and abuſeſt and deſpiſeſt that bleſſed Spirit of his, that comes to ſeale unto thee the redemption that he hath purchaſed by his blood. Better had it been for thee, that thou hadſt never been born: for if he be *wroth, bleſſed* onely *are all they that put their truſt in him*, & come preparedly unto his holy ordinance, and that by faith embrace the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. But woe unto all prophane perſons that live in their ſinnes: if his wrath bee but a little kindled, then woe to all drunkards, ſwearers, and uncleane perſons; but

bleſſed

blessed is that man that is come out of his sinne. For if his wrath bee so terrible when it is but *a little* kindled, O how much more fearfull will it be when it is deeply incensed! Therfore if thou commest unto this holy Sacrament in thy sinne, without due preparation and examination, what doest thou but even set the wrath of God burning upon thy soule and body from the very bottome of hell?

When the Lord delivered the Law upon Mount *Sinai*, he commanded the people to sanctifie themselves; yea if a beast did but touch the mountain, he must dye for the same, even be stoned to death, or thrust through with a dart, *Heb.* 12. Much more then now, when the Lord doth deliver the Gospel, especially the ground-work and master-peece thereof, the Lord Jesus Christ, and that in the most blessedest manner that ever God exhibited himselfe unto man; how much more doth God require purity and holinesse, that all such as come to receive the Lord Jesus Christ in the blessed Sacrament, should be sanctified, purging their hearts, and cleansing soules from all their sin and uncleanneſse? Should not a beast touch the mountaine where God did appeare, and dareſt thou touch the body of Christ, and drink his blessed blood in thy sinne? The very Angels of heaven will curse thee, and the clouds of heaven will poure down showres of vengeance upon thee: for God hath more severe punishments to inflict upon sinners under the Gospel, then hee used under the Law, though

though then hee ſtruck them with more viſible and ſenſible plagues and judgments then ordinarily he bringeth upon men now: as *Gehezi* for his covetouſneſſe was ſtrucken with leproſie, *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, the earth opened her mouth and ſwallowed them up quick for their rebellion againſt the Lord: *Er* and *Onan* were ſtrucken dead for their wickedneſſe: *Jeroboam* had his hand withered for ſtretching of it forth to ſtrike the Lords Prophet. And though the Lord bring not ſuch ſenſible puniſhments now as hee did then, yet hee knowes how to puniſh the world a thouſand times more then hee did then, at this time. As a father hath other kinds of puniſhments for his ſonne, when hee is grown up, then hee had when hee was in coats, and but a child; then a twigge or two would ſerve the turne, but if he comes to mans eſtate, and then rebell againſt his father, it may be that he will diſinherit him, and caſt him out of his family: So in former time God did ſcourge and whip his people when they ſinned againſt him; but now he hath drawn out his Church to this age, even to the age of the Goſpel, hee hath ſeverer ſtrokes of plagues and curſes, wherewith to confound all prophane and impenitent ſinners, that dare to abuſe that bleſſed Sacrament of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

The ſecond Reaſon is, in regard of the matter of the Sacrament, which is Chriſt alſo; who as he was the efficient cauſe, ſo in regard of Sacramentall relation, he is the matter of the Communion, *Reaſ. 2.*

munion, 1 Cor. 10.16. *The Cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the blood of Christ? and the bread which we breake, is it not the Communion of the body of Christ?* Now the better matter any thing is of, the more heynous is the defilement of it: A master will not be so angry for casting his earthen vessels into the mire, as hee will bee for casting his rich jewels. The bread and wine in the Sacrament, are the blessed communion of the pretious body and blood of Christ, and dareſt thou to defile them? Knoweſt thou not that thou doſt greatly increase the wrath of the Lord againſt thy ſoule thereby? That ſoule whatever it was from *Dan* to *Beersheba*, that came in his uncleanneſſe to partake of any of thoſe holy things which the children of Israel hallowed to the Lord, whether hee were man or woman, rich or poore, that perſon was to be cut off from the preſence of the Lord, *Levit.* 22. whereto the Lord ſets his ſeale for the confirmation thereof (*I am the Lord*:) And as ſure as I am the Lord, ſo will I ſee it accompliſhed. So my beloved, let me ſay unto you of *England* from *Dover* to *Newcaſtle*, or from one end of the town unto the other, that ſoule who toucheth any of theſe holy things with an impure heart, and commeth to partake of them with his uncleanneſſe upon him, living in his ſinnes, and wallowing in his luſts, caſting off the feare of the Lord, and making no conſcience to walk in Gods wayes, that ſoule ſhall ſurely bee cut off that commeth ſo unworthily unto the Table of the

e Lord; not onely the hand that taketh it, and
e mouth that eateth it, but even the very ſoule
him that ſo commeth, ſhall periſh from
e preſence of the Lord. So *Levit.* 7. 20. *That*
le that eateth of the fleſh of the Sacrifices of
ace offerings that pertain unto the Lord, having his
ncleanneſſe upon him, even that ſoule ſhall be cut off
om his people. Now you know that all thoſe
crifices had relation unto Chriſt; but yet under
e Law they were but ſhadowes and typicall
lations, and were not ſo lively and effectuall
eans for the exhibiting of Chriſt, as the Lords
pper is: And therefore if ſuch as came in their
ncleanneſſe unto them, were puniſhed with no
ſe puniſhment then a cutting off from the fel-
wſhip with the Lords people; what wrath
d vengeance will the Lord bring upon thee
at comeſt with thy uncleanneſs upon thee unto
is holy communion? *Auguſtine* ſaith, that
an that receiveth the Sacrament unworthily,
eceiveth a greater plague to his owne ſoule,
d a greater torment to his own conſcience, yea
d heapeth up a ſtore of wrath unto himſelfe
gainſt the day of wrath. Me thinkes thou that
v ſt in thy ſinnes, and wilt not come out of
them, when thou heareſt theſe words [*This is*
my body] and ſeeſt the bread broken before thy
ce, it ſhould even make thee tremble and
quake for to look upon it, more for to touch it,
d moſt of all for to taſt it: for *it is the communi-*
n of the body and blood of Chriſt; and how dareſt
hou come in thy ſinnes for to defile it?

Reas. 3. A third Reason is, in regard of the forme of the Sacrament, which is Christ too; for as he is the efficient cause that instituted it, and as he is also the matter of the Sacrament, so in the third place Christ is the forme of the Sacrament also, wherein the confirming grace of God is sealed up unto thee. Now as it is treason for a man to offer contempt unto the Kings broad Seale, so certainly is it high treason against this King of Kings, to contemne this blessed Sacrament, which is the Seale of the righteousnesse of faith. If thou shouldst clip the Kings Coine, I will say that thou art a Traytor. Oh what a traitor art thou then, yea, an accursed traitor in the account of God and Christ, if thou clippest his holy communion, if thou clip it of thy examination, and due preparation, and so come hand over head, not regarding so holy an ordinance! Thou sinnest against the Court of heaven. That which Saint *James* speakes in generall of the whole worship of God [*Draw neere unto God*] let mee apply it in particular unto this drawing neere unto God in this holy Communion, James 4. 8. *Cleanse your hands ye sinners, and purifie your hearts yee double minded*: Draw neer unto God in the hearing, reading and meditating on Gods word; draw neere unto God in prayer, and in this holy Sacrament, and receive it for your amendment of life. [*Draw neere to God.*] I, that I will, (saith the wicked man) I will come to Church, & draw neer unto the holy communion. Will you so? (saith the Apostle

Apoſtle:) No, firſt, *Cleanſe your hands yee ſinners, and purge your hearts yee double minded:* As if hee ſhould ſay, never think of drawing neere unto God, or ſetting foot on this holy ground, and handling thoſe holy myſteries of Chriſt, unleſſe thou firſt purge thy heart, and cleanſe thy ſoule from all thy filthy luſts and curſed corruptions, leſt otherwiſe thou comming in thy ſinnes with thy uncleanneſſe on thee, and ſo receiving unworthily, thou eateſt and drinkeſt thine owne *damnation*, (as our Engliſh tranſlation hath it) damnation to thy ſelfe, and not to another. No, God forbid, that thou ſhouldeſt by thy unworthy comming, eate and drink condemnation to another: for thou that art a child of God, and commeſt unto the Table of the Lord with repentance, and a ſound meaſure of preparation, though others that ſit in the ſame pew with thee, for their prophaneneſſe eate and drink their own damnation, yet thou ſhalt bee ſure to receive the ſeale and aſſurance of thy reconciliation and ſalvation, with free acceptance of God, through the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; for every man ſhall beare his own burden. *This is very true.*

The laſt Reaſon is, in regard of the end of the Sacrament, which is Chriſt alſo: For as he is the efficient, materiall, and formall cauſe, ſo Chriſt is alſo the finall cauſe of the Sacrament: So it is in the 26 verſe, *As oft as you eate of this bread, and drink of this cup, you ſhew forth the Lords death untill he come.* Not that Chriſt may be eaten with the teeth, or corporally received in the Sacra- *Reaſ. 4.*

Sacrament, or as if he were there productively or tranſubſtantially, (as the Papiſts ſay) no, the Apoſtle ſhewes, that the end of the celebration of this Sacrament, is for to ſhew forth the death of Chriſt untill he come.

Obj. I, but (ſay the Romiſts) unleſſe we eate the body, and drink the blood of Chriſt really, and not the conſecrated bread and wine, how can any man by this unworthy communicating, eate and drink his own damnation, and make himſelf guilty of the body and blood of Chriſt?

Anſ. I anſwer, a man cannot bring this guilt upon himſelfe by eating a peece of bread, or drinking a cup of wine; but the Apoſtle hath an anſwer ſo fitted for this, as that all the Papiſts in the world ſhall never bee able to gainſay; and therefore I pray you to mark it: for he hath joyned theſe two verſes together; *As oft as you eate of this bread, and drinke of this cup, you ſhew forth the Lords death till hee come: Wherefore whoſoever eateth this bread, or drinketh this cup of the Lord unworthily, ſhall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*; even for this cauſe, becauſe it is the ſhewing forth of Chriſts death till hee come. Therefore if thou eateſt and drinkeſt unworthily, comming in thy ſinnes, and reſolveſt to goe on in them, that as thou wert proud before thou cameſt to the Sacrament, ſo thou art ſtill; as thou wert cholerick, angry, and impatient before, ſo thou art ſtill; as thou wert luke-warme and dead-hearted in Gods ſervice before, ſo thou remaineſt ſtill; remember I pray thee, that

as oft as thou haſt come unto the communion in thoſe thy ſinnes; thou haſt made thy ſelf guilty of the body and blood of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Therefore I beſeech you to look, and in time to repent, and pray with the Prophet *David*, *Pſal.* 51. *Deliver me from blood-guiltineſſe, O Lord*, even from the blood of thy Sonne, leſt one day it bee laid unto thy charge, and required ſtraitly at thy hands. *For for this cauſe many are ſick among you, and many weak.*

Is it ſo then, that the Lord doth ſo ſeverely puniſh the unworthy receivers of the Sacrament? Take notice (I pray you) then from whence commeth all ſickneſſe, weakneſſe, and mortality, and the reaſon why the Lord doth ſend ſo many kinds of ſorrowes, croſſes, and miſeries upon men, namely, becauſe of the unworthy receiving of the Lords Supper. So ſaith Mr. *Calvin*, why doe you wonder to ſee ſuch warres, and rumours of warres, that there is ſo many bloodſheds, ſo many Townes and Cities ruinated, and ſo many Countries ſacked and depopulated, ſo many calamities come upon the Churches abroad, and ſo many plagues and ſcourges to over-run Chriſtendome at this day, is not the cauſe plain enough? men come unto the Table of the Lord careleſly and unworthily. And, beloved, we ſhall never ſee the Lord take away his judgments here from the earth, untill we betake our ſelves to a more diligent and holy receiving of the Sacrament. For this very cauſe there are ſo many ſtrange diſeaſes amongſt us,

Vſe 1.

O never

never formerly known or heard of untill these dayes, as the French Pox, the English Sweat, (as they call it) that even the Physitians themselves are blunted at them; and (as *Peter Martyr* well observes) hence are all diseases, as plagues, pestilences, (which were late amongst us) dropsies, bloody Flux, Agues, Apoplexies, Convulsions, burning Feavers, and impostumes, &c. and all for this cause. One man hath fallen into a Feaver, and we wonder at the cause whence he took it; but in truth the communion hath cast him into his Feaver, and the Lord will avenge himselfe on him for the same. Another is sicke, and he thinkes that a cold hath brought it upon him; but it is the unworthy receiving of the Sacrament that is truly the cause of it. A third man dieth before his time, even in his full strength, before in the course of nature hee hath ended halfe his dayes; but the cause is unworthy comming to the Communion, which hath taken hold of him, and cut off the thread of his life.

Many there be that expound these words in a spirituall sense, *Many are sick and weake, and many are fallen asleep*, that is to say, many have their consciences seared, and their hearts hardened, &c. and this is true also, that because men come unpreparedly, they have their hearts hardened, and their consciences seared, and their soules plagued with many spirituall plagues. But it is as true also in temporall judgements, thou hast had many afflictions, and much sickness laid

laid upon thee, but thank thy ſelfe for it; namely, becauſe thou haſt come unworthily unto the communion, thou haſt had much weakneſſe in thy body, which hath coſt thee much mony, and weakned thy eſtate; but thy unholy comming unto the Sacrament, is that which thou mayeſt thank for it. Thou haſt been reproached and contemned, and endured much ſhame; but take notice of it, that it proceeds from the fore-going cauſe, and that is a ſpeciall reaſon why the Lord hath brought theſe and many other evils upon thee. Thou canſt ſay the commandements (for the moſt part) by rote; but thou didſt never know the myſtery of this one commandement, *Thou ſhalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*: Beloved, the Communion is one of Gods own names, and how many thouſands are there in the world that take this name of God in vain? Is there never a drunkard here in this congregation, that hath been at the Sacrament? Is there never a whoremonger, never a covetous worldling? Where is the man, whoſoever hee bee amongſt you all, that is ſuch a one? He is in the ſtate of damnation. Is there never a luke-warm and carnall Chriſtian, that contents himſelf with a formall worſhip, and a dead performance of holy duties, that hath no zeal for God, nor courage for his truth, but is careleſſe of all Gods commandements? whoſoever amongſt you are guilty of theſe ſins, or any other, and hath come unto this holy Communion in them, they are the perſons, that how oft ſoever they have received,

ſo oft they have taken this name of the Lord in vain: And if I ſhould examine this Congregation from the one end of it unto the other, I feare that every pew would yeeld ſome one, if not many, that have taken a Communion (wch is one of *Gods names*) in vain. Should I but examine thee that commeſt unto the Communion this day, how by the laſt Sacrament thou receivedſt, and the laſt Sermon thou haſt heard, thy faith is ſtrengthened, thy repentance renewed, and thy obedience is increaſed, and thy care doubled for to walk with God? whether thou art made by them more zealous for good, more forward in his worſhip and ſervice, and every day more holy and heavenly minded; if not, then thou haſt taken this *Name of the Lord thy God in vain*, and *the Lord will not hold thee guiltleſſe*, that is, the Lord wil not take away the guilt from thy conſcience, but he will let thy ſinne lie open, and thou ſhalt not be cleanſed from it, nor juſtified by the very blood of Jeſus Chriſt, but it ſhall reſt upon thee to thy utter ruine and deſtruction, unleſſe thou forſake thy ſinnes, and ſo come preparedly unto this holy Table and banquet. I know here is a covenant of grace, a ſweet refreſhing for every humbled ſoul that is hungry & broken for his ſinnes, and for every poore diſtreſſed conſcience: let all ſuch come and lay their ſinnes upon Chriſts croſſe, and welcome: But if there be any that come in their ſinnes, and will not reforme their lives, but be as they came ſinners, ſo they mean for to continue, the Lord himſelfe will

will lay this mans ſinnes upon his owne head, and they ſhall never be taken away from him, but Chriſt ſhall at the day of judgement pronounce him a guilty perſon, to his eternall condemnation.

King *Balſhazzar* that abuſed but the holy veſſels of the Temple, and the Cups thereof, what a diſmall plague befell him for it? *Dan.* 5 27. 28. *God hath numbred thy Kingdome and finiſhed it, thou art weighed in the ballance, and art found too light, thy Kingdome is departed from thee, and is given to the Medes and Perſians.* So (beloved brethren) if any of you ſhall abuſe this Cup of the Lord, comming to it with a filthy unclean heart, and polluted conſcience, and earthly affections, there is a hand-writing againſt every ſoule that thus commeth this day unto the Table of the Lord: thou art numbred and weighed, and found too light: thou, O man, and woman, whoſoever thou art, that prophaneſt and contemneſt theſe holy things of God, thou ſhalt be found out, and the Lord will keep thee out by his ſpirituall plagues, and thy ſinne ſhall never bee done away, but be required at thy hands, and ſtand in everlaſting record againſt thee; O my brethren, that you would but ſeriouſly conſider of it, and look about you, it being ſo weighty a thing, that ſo neerly concernes every one of you.

But I would not have any poore broken heart and humble ſoule to miſtake me, and ſo thereby be diſcouraged: but give me leave (I pray you) for to uſe the words of the Prophet, though ſpo-

ken in another ſenſe, *Pſal.* 115. *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give the glory:* So let me apply this doctrine unto the comfort of all poore broken hearted ſinners, and beat off all carnall prophane wretches that live in their ſinnes; not unto you, O drunkards, and ſwaggerers, not unto you whoremaſters and uncleane perſons, that wallow in ungodlineſſe, I ſay not unto you, but unto the poor afflicted ſoul & contrite ſpirit that lieth bleeding and gaſping under the weight of his ſin, and that trembles and fears being oppreſt with the ſenſe of its own unworthineſſe, panting and breathing after Chriſt Jeſus, and ſuing earneſtly unto the Throne of grace for mercie and forgiveneſſe: unto thee only belongs this comfort, and therefore take it home to thee, and know it for thy ſelfe: Art thou troubled with a hard heart, and an unbeleeving ſoule, and art even wearied and tired out with thy many ſinnes and infirmities? Come thou with comfort unto this holy Communion: for thou ſhalt be ſure to finde ſaving good by it; to thee it ſhall be a ſpirituall medicine to heale all thy diſeaſes, and to cure all thy ſtrong and prevailing corruptions; and if thou come unto this holy Table of the Lord, it ſhall make thee as it is recorded of St. *Laurence*, able to ſuffer Martyrdom, and to get victory over all thy unruly affections; yea at laſt thou ſhalt tread Satan thy arch-enemy under thy feet. Therefore bee not diſmaied: for the Lord Jeſus invites thee to come. What if thy infirmities be many, yet the

the mercies of God, which he tenders to thee in this Communion, are many more. *Samson* who was the ſtrongeſt Souldier and Champion in his time that was in Iſrael to overcome the Philiſtims, hee yet began his ſtrength in weakneſſe, being at the firſt overcome by a woman: So though the Lord intend to make thee a ſtrong Chriſtian, he will make thee to begin in weakneſſe to perfect thy power; to begin in ſinne and miſery, that he may make thee to end in glory. I know Gods children here may receive temporall puniſhments, and bring temporall ſcourges upon themſelves, as wee may ſee amongſt the Corinthians here, but it ſhall be for their good and amendment, namely, for their correction, and not for their ruine and deſtruction; that ſo being chaſtened by the Lord, they might not bee condemned with the world. Therefore if thou commeſt careleſly and unprofitably, God will chaſtiſe thee with the rods of men, as he did *Peter*, who receiving the Sacrament with his Maſter over night, yet the next day thrice denied him; but God whipt his ſoule, and ſcourged his conſcience for it, and beat him black and blew, ſo that he *went out and wept bitterly*: Nay, he could ſcarce wipe off that ſinne, and recover himſelfe again whilſt he lived.

Wherefore let us take heed of unprepared comming to the Sacrament; for God will not hold ſuch guiltleſſe: Yea, if his own ſonnes or daughters tranſgreſſe thereby, hee will make them to feele the ſmart of it. But now to come

to all such as come month by month, hand over head, without any examination and repentance in their uncleannesse and abomination, making no conscience of their reformation, let me tell them that it shall be one of Christs demands of them in the day of judgement, How oft hast thou been at my Table? How oft hast thou been partakers of that holy Communion which I gave unto thee? Hast thou come preparedly, or received worthily, or no? Hast thou eate bread at my Table with me, and lift up thy heele against me? Did I command, and thou wouldst not obey? Did I send my Ministers to thee to reform, but thou wouldst not be reformed? Did I check and reprove thee for thy pride, blasphemies, drunkennesse, covetousnesse, anger, wrath, malice, fornication, hypocrisie and prophaneesse in the matter of my worship? and yet wouldst thou still live in these sinnes? Where are all the Sacraments that thou hast received? How hast thou behaved thy selfe? Where are the sinnes that thou hast forsaken, and pleasing corruptions that thou hast abhorred? What grace and holinesse hast thou received by the meanes thou hast enjoyed? and how hast thou manifested the same through thy whole conversation. Oh! woe, woe unto thee, yea, & a world of woes unto thee, and unto all such as shall bee silent and speechlesse to these or the like demands of Christ: for they cannot say they have come out of their sins, and have been reformed by the means of grace, and have received spirituall nourishment and refreshing

refreshing from the heavenly banquet of the Communion of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A man will especially regard the last words of a deare friend, who is as a mans soul, when he is to speak upon his death-bed, and will be carefull to remember them: and dost thou not more regard the last Will and Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ? We count it a horrible sinne to alter the last Wil of a man that is dead. Beloved, the Lord Jesus, before he left this world, instituted this blessed Sacrament at his last Will and Testament, and hath given us a charge, that as we would not eate and drink our owne damnation by bringing the guilt of his body and blood upon our soules, so that wee should discerne the Lords body, and not come unpreparedly in our sinnes and abominations, without reverence and respect of such holy and high mysteries, as if there were nothing to bee received and looked for after, then the bare & naked element of bread and wine, or as if we did come to communicate with unclean Devils. O my brethren, if you had but faith, you would be able to discerne Christ in the Sacrament; and therefore when thou commest unto it, thou must prepare and sanctifie thy selfe for to communicate with him in those holy ordinances and heavenly mysteries of his most pretious body and blood: For if so bee that thou retainest thy sins, and so come unworthily unto this holy Table of the Lord, thou art a great covenant-breaker with God: For thou never com

commest unto the communion, but thou makest and renewest thy covenant with God, wherein thou promisest thus much or the like in effect. Lord, I have been formerly a drunkard, but now I promise to give it over, and never to be a drunkard more; I have been a scoffer at religion, and a mocker and derider of thy children; but now I faithfully promise (Lord) that I will never doe so any more. I have been wicked and sinfull, disobeying and rebelling against all thy holy commandements, and respected not thy judgements and thy promises, and have been careless of thy glory: But now (Lord) as I eat this bread, and drink this wine; so I covenant unto thee, & promise to thee, that I will amend all my sinfull wayes, and become a reformed Christian. And as I ever look that the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ represented in the elements, should nourish my soule unto eternall life: so I promise to be disobedient to the Devil, but faithfull and obedient unto thee. I will stop my ears against the alluring inchantments of the world, and wicked suggestions of the Devill; but I will open them wide to hearken to thy voyce, that I may obey thy commands. But now as thou hast made it, so if thou hast broken this thy covenant with God, returning to thy former courses of sin and disobedience against him, know thou, that this covenant of thine which thou hast broken, shall stand in full force against thee: for God will assuredly require it at thy hands; and all the Sacraments which thou hast received,

thou

thou haſt received them but as ſo many ſeales and pledges. of thy juſt deſerved condemnation.

But ſome man may object and ſay, Do all that come unworthily unto the Sacrament, eate and drink their own damnation? Then many hundreds, yea thouſands are damned: Are all damned that have eat and drunk unworthily?

Anſ. No, but a man may eat and drinke his owne damnation three wayes: Firſt, in regard of guilt and liableneſſe unto Gods wrath: and ſo he that eateth and drinketh his naturall food, his dinner, ſupper, or breakfaſt in his ſinnes, eateth and drinketh his own damnation: yea, whoſoever thou art, that commeſt unto this holy banquet in thy ſinnes, in thy pride, choler, malice, wrath or revenge, covetouſneſſe, hypocriſie, and deadneſſe in Gods ſervice, thou never eateſt a bit of bread, but thou eateſt and drinkeſt thine own damnation; that is, thou eateſt and drinkeſt that which will witneſſe againſt thee another day, *Deut.* 28. 16, 17, 18, 19 verſes, &c. *If thou wilt not hearken to the voyce of the Lord thy God, to obſerve and doe all his commandements, then all theſe curſes ſhall come upon thee & overtake thee: Curſed ſhalt thou be in the City, and curſed in the field, curſed ſhall be thy basket and thy ſtore.* Now if thy bread be curſed, then thou alſo art curſed that eateſt it.

Secondly, in regard of the ſeal and obligation in the conſcience, ſo he that eateth and drinketh the Sacrament in his ſins, eateth and drinketh his own damnation; that is, hee eates and drinks that

that which seals up his damnation against the great day of account. And thus many amongst us, and I feare the most part of this congregation, have eate and drunk their owne damnation. But this seal may bee broken off, and God grant it may.

Thirdly, in regard of sigillation in heaven; and so he that eats & drinks unworthily, and will not be reformed; he that receives the Sacrament time after time, but still retains his sins, and will not be humbled for them, nor forsake them, hee setteth a seale in heaven upon his own damnation, that all the whole world can never break off, but such a one most certainly is a damned creature.

And now (my brethren) God forbid there should be any such here, but that this seale may bee broken off: And O that God would put some strength into this word, that it may be broken off by your godly sorrow for your sin, and forsaking of them all: for if this seale bee set on your damnation, why doe I yet speak unto you, and intreat & beseech you in the name of Christ, to come home and be reconciled to him? and I desire to stand here, as *Jehoiadah* set Porters at the gates of the Citie, and of the house of the Lord, to keep off all those that come in their uncleanesse, 2 *Chron.* 23. 19. So I stand this day as the Porter of the Lord, to keep the Lords watch, that no prophane wretch, no proud hearted sinner, that meanes not to enter into a new course of life, that no such one come unto this holy

holy communion. I charge that as you will answer the guilt of Christs blood before Gods Throne, that you meddle not with it. But now if there should be any that would absent himselfe because he will the more freely goe on in his sins, let him know that such a one excludes himselfe from the benefits and merits of Christ death, and shall never have the benefit of a redeemer at the day of judgment; but shall perish in his sins for his careleſſe neglect and fearfull contempt of so effectuall and powerfull means of salvation and purging, as is the blood of Christ truly and really offered in the Sacrament. Wherefore if thou commest or commest not, woe is thee, if so be thou livest and continuest in thy sins, and goest on in thy unholy courses.

And now to conclude; as the Cherubim stood before Paradise with a naked sword to keep *Adam* out, that he might not not enter and so eate of the tree of life: so I bring with me the sword of God, to run it up to the hilts in the heart and bowels of every ungodly man, every rebellious and impenitent sinner this day, that dares presume to rush upon this holy ordinance of God, with a polluted and uncleane heart. Therefore let me exhort thee, that as thou tendrest the eternall good of thy soule, so thou be carefull not to eate the body of Christ, nor drink his bloud in thy sins, lest thou eate thine own bane, and drink thine owne curse: Nay, so doing, thy misery will bee so great, as a good man well weighing and considering of it, said, I professe I had rather have

have all my veins cut open, and my blood ſpilt on the ground, then deliver the body and blood of Chriſt unto a prophane ſinner: for why ſhould I deliver his own bane and deſtruction unto him? But now (my brethren and beloved) come out of your ſins, come and welcome, if you part with your luſts, and ſo you ſhall bee ſure to have his blood to waſh your heart, and cleanſe you, his righteouſneſſe to cleare you, and cloath you, his graces to ſtrengthen you, his ſpirit to heal and to ſanctifie your hearts and natures; and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to ſupply all good that is wanting in you. But if yet notwithſtanding all this that hath been ſaid, you will goe on in your ſins, and live as you did in your ſwearing, whoring, lying, and drinking, and all manner of filthineſſe; and as you came unto it unclean, ſo you depart away from it more unclean, and never make any conſcience of any reformation, I pronounce this day before God and his elect Angels, that thou ſhalt ſurely periſh, and thy ſoule and body damned and tormented in the ſcorching flames of hell for evermore. Therefore hearken unto inſtruction, and give eare unto counſell, now whiles that the Lord offers it to you, that ſo you may not harden your hearts any more, but may heare and obey, that your ſoules may live, and ſo comming together to this holy and bleſſed Communion for the better and not for the worſe, you may return home with the bleſſing of children.

FINIS.

EXAMINATION REQVIRED IN EVERY COMMUNICANT.

A Sermon preached by Mr. *William Fenner* Minister of Gods word.

2 COR. 11. 28.

But let a man examine himselfe, and so let him eate of that Bread and drink of that Cup.

IN the latter part of this Chapter the Apostle treats of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper: And first he reproves the Corinthians for their unworthy comming to it, as we see in verse 18. There were errors, and Schismes, contempt of the poore, drunkennesse, excesse, disorder, and unprofitablenesse in the duties of God: they waxed worse and worse

by the Sacrament. All theſe, and ſundry other abuſes were among them; ſo that they did not eate the Lords Supper aright as they ought.

Secondly, he reduceth them back to the firſt prime inſtitution of it by Jeſus Chriſt, as we ſee in verſe 23. that hereby they might both ſee how grievouſly they had abuſed the Sacrament; and likewiſe ſee how they might ſanctifiedly uſe it.

Thirdly, he ſhews the danger of unworthy receivers: and this he ſets out two wayes:

Firſt, by the grievouſneſſe of the ſinne, ſuch a perſon makes himſelfe guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, as we ſee verſe 27.

Secondly, by the dolefull conſequence that follows upon it; *He eats and drinks damnation to himſelfe*, as we ſee verſe 29.

The ſum of the text

Now in this verſe (that I may not trouble you with ſpeaking of any more matter then what is neceſſary for the preſent Theam) he ſhewes how we may prevent, eſcape, and avoid this danger; how we may take an order that we doe not fall into this grievous ſinne, that we doe not plunge our ſelves into this grievous miſery: *Let a man examine himſelfe, and ſo let him eate of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.* A man muſt examine himſelfe, ſift his owne ſoule, and labour to prepare himſelfe, before he dare to venture on this ſacred buſineſſe. In theſe words, before we ſet upon the particular handling of them, we may obſerve, that

Obſer. 1. We muſt not ruſh upon the ſacrament

We muſt not ruſh upon the Sacrament.

There muſt ſomewhat be done before we can receive

receive it, *Let a man examine himſelfe, and ſo let him eate of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.* There are none of the Ordinances of God, that a man may ſafely ruſh upon. Wouldſt thou offer any ſacrifice to God? But thou muſt ſtay firſt, and examine thy ſelfe, whether there be not ſomthing yet undone: it may be thou haſt offended God in ſomething or other; it may bee thou art out with thy brother, thou muſt firſt goe and be reconciled to thy brother, and then offer thy gift, *Matth.* 5. So, wouldſt thou reprove thy neighbour? It may be there is ſomewhat out of order, ſome indiſpoſedneſſe in thee, thou art not yet in caſe to ſet on this duty; it may bee thou art faulty, and guilty thy ſelf; it may be thou haſt a beam in thine own eye. *Firſt* (ſaith the Text) *pull the beam out of thine own eye, and then thou mayſt ſee clearly to pull the moat out of thy brothers eye*, Matth. 7. 5. So wouldſt thou reforme thy outward man? But it may bee thy inward man is not reformed; there is ſome luſt in thy heart, ſome pride in thy will, ſome ſtubbornneſſe in thy ſpirit, ſome Idoll in thy boſome; *Firſt, cleanſe the inſide of the platter*, *Matth.* 23. 26. There is never an ordinance of God that can bee done, but there muſt be ſomewhat done firſt, a man muſt doe ſomthing before. As in the choice of Officers, as Miniſters, or Deacons, other Officers in the Church, firſt, they muſt bee proved before they be choſen: ſo in all the Ordinances of God. Would wee come to the Sacrament? There is ſomewhat muſt bee done firſt, we muſt

Matth. 7.

Mat. 7 5.

Mat 23. 26

examine our ſelves, and root out all unſanctifiedneſſe, and indiſpoſition, that cannot ſtand with the right communicating in the Lords Supper. And ſo in every other good duty.

The reaſons of this are:

Reaſ. 1. Naturally wee are no invited gueſts.

First, becauſe naturally wee are not invited gueſts, wee are not ſuch as are invited to the Lords Supper: we are children of wrath, and as long as we are in ſuch a ſtate, we cannot come aright to the Communion. This is childrens bread, and it cannot be given to dogges. Chriſt, whenſoever he ſets his dainties before his people, he tells us for whom they are, *Take, eate, this is my Body that is broken for you.* This is the Supper that is made for you, as it is in this Chapter, verſe 24. First we muſt prove our ſelves invited gueſts.

It is true, the Lord Chriſt invites every man to the Lords Supper; but he invites him methodically, hee muſt bee in ſuch an eſtate: but every man is not ſo fitted, a man muſt be a member of Chriſt that means to partake of Chriſts death; he muſt be one that is in Chriſt, he muſt be able to prove that he is ingraffed into Chriſt, he muſt bee able to ſhew the mark of the Lord Chriſt on him. As it is with ſome of your great dinners, and feaſts in this Citie, you have tickets, and all that are admitted to the feaſt, muſt ſhew their ticket before they are admitted: So thou muſt be able to ſhew thy ticket, that thou haſt an invitation from Chriſt, thou muſt have a mark, and token

Simile.

ken from Christ that thou commest, and commest with his warrant.

A second Reason is, though thou be invited, it may be thou art not disposed. If a man will doe a thing that hee is naturally indisposed to, there must be somewhat done before of necessitie: So the Lords Supper, it is a thing that naturally wee are indisposed unto, therefore somewhat must of necessity bee done first. Naturally we are unholy, we are unthankfull, and carnall, we are in our sinnes, strangers from God, and the Covenant of God, and from the seale of the Covenant: all this indisposition must be wrought out before we can comfortably come hither. If Christ would have the very Chamber first trimmed, before he instituted the Passeover, and the Sacrament, much more will hee have the soule disposed for him, and the heart cleansed from all filthinesse. If hee that eat of the Peace-offering being indisposed, having his uncleanesse upon him, was to bee cut off from his people, *Levit.* 7. 20. what will God doe to such people as come hither in their uncleanesse, and indisposition, unsanctified, and unqualified?

Reas. 2. We are indisposed

Levit. 7. 20

Thirdly, suppose we were both invited and disposed, yet this is not enough: This is a solemn Ordinance of God, and an ordinary disposition will not serve the turne. Though every child of God bee ordinarily disposed to every good word and work, to pray, and to heare the word of God, he is prepared and furnished to e-

Reas. 3. Solemne preparations required to the Sacrament.

very well-doing ordinarily and habitually; but a man muſt bee diſpoſed further: There is a ſolemne preparation required to the Communion, as in *Deut.* 16. 15. there were ſolemne feaſts in the Law: ſo there is this ſolemne feaſt in the Goſpel, and there are ſolemne preparations required thereto. When we come to the Communion, to eate the Lords Supper, it is not eating and drinking in Chriſts preſence; for ſo may any reprobate doe, and yet Chriſt may ſay to him, Depart from me, thou worker of iniquity. It is not to come and ſit in your Pewes, and wait till the Bread come, and take it; and till the Cup come, and drink it; ſo many a reprobate may doe, and the Corinthians did, that did eate and drink their own damnation: But there muſt be a ſolemne preparation to it, to be *ſealed with the Spirit of Promiſe*, to be righteous by faith in the body and blood of Chriſt. For a man to be humble, and empty of his ſinne, to bee thirſty after the pretious blood of Chriſt, to bee fed and built up in the Promiſes. It is a weighty thing to come to the Communion: a man muſt bee a *worthy man*, or elſe he hath nothing to doe here. As *Solomon* ſaid of *Adonijah*, *If he be a worthy man, not a haire ſhall fall from his head; but if wickednes be found in him, he ſhall die*, 1 King. 1. 52. So if we be worthy men and women, not a haire of our head ſhall fall to the ground, none of the curſes ſhall light on us, that light on unprepared perſons: but if wickedneſſe bee found in us, if we be guilty of any ſinne, if we live in any luſt not

Deut. 16. 16.

4 King. 52

not mortified; if there be any prophaneneſſe in our lives, in our families, in our courſes and callings, though we catch hold of the hornes of the Altar, though we partake of theſe holy myſteries, yet we ſhall be ſo far from having any mercie, as that we ſhall haſten our own ruine, we ſet a ſeal on our owne judgment, and make our caſe worſe then it was before.

Uſe. To take heed of raſh performance of duties.

Let us take notice of it, and never dare to ruſh on any of Gods ordinances. You know what became of the fooliſh man in the Goſpel, that when they were invited to come to the marriage Supper, he thought it was nothing but to come with them that came, to crowd in with them, and ſit down among the reſt; he conſidered not what he went about, that he might be prepared accordingly; the event was this, he was caſt out into utter darkneſſe, Matth. 22. 13. It is dangerous ruſhing on any of Gods ordinances. To ruſh upon prayer, for a man to fall downe upon his knees, and to utter any thing before the Lord haſtily with his mouth, not conſidering that God is in heaven, and he on the earth. A mans word may damne his own ſoule, and pull vengeance on his own pate, his prayers may prove a curſe, his prayer for mercy may bee turned into vengeance: So the higher the ſervice, the greater the danger. As the ſervants of *Abigail* ſaid to her, *Conſider what you doe*, when evill was determined againſt them: ſo conſider what you doe when you come to the Sacrament, you come to a weighty thing, to that that will either ſet you

2 Sam. 15. 17.

neerer to the Kingdome of God, or to hell and condemnation. But I let this passe, and come to the words themselves.

Let a man examine himselfe, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.

In these words observe,

Parts of the Text.

First, the matter of the duty commanded, that is, to *eat of that bread, and to drink of that cup.*

Secondly, the manner of doing the dutie; not onely to eate of that bread, but *so* to eate; and not onely to drink of that cup, but *so* to drink.

Thirdly, the rule of direction how to come in a right manner to partake of it, that is, by examining of our selves, *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

Fourthly and lastly, the benefit following that direction, and that is in this word *But*, *But let a man examine himself.* He had said before, *He that eats and drinks unworthily, is made guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*; and, *hee discerneth not the Lords body*, vers. 27. *But*, saith he, as if he should say, if a man would prevent this; if a man would take order that he be not guilty of the body and blood of Christ, that he doe not come undiscerningly to these heavenly mysteries, but with comfort, and title to the promises, with hope and confidence and speeding there of the benefits of Christ exhibited, then *let him examine himselfe, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

Now

Now I will paſſe over ſome of theſe points, namely, that we are to eate that bread, and drink that cup. *There is a neceſſity that wee ſhould receive the Lords Supper.* I need not ſtand on this, you know it is ſufficiently proved by the Sacrament of the Law, which was the fore-runner of this Sacrament, that ſoule that did not partake of that, was to die the death, he was to be cut off from Gods people, *Num.* 9. 13. If the Lord was ſo carefull of thoſe Sacraments that were inferior to theſe (and yet they were of the ſame ſubſtance as theſe) that the man that neglected to come to them, to partake of them, was to be cut off, to be excommunicated from the people of God, and to be rent off from the congregation of the Saints, then how much more for theſe heavenly, and weighty, and glorious ordinances of the Goſpel, which are far more glorious then them of the Law? But I will not ſtand upon that.

Neceſſity of receiving the Lords Suppor.

Num. 9. 13

I might here take notice too of the frequencie of the dury: for ſo it hath dependance on thoſe words formerly, *As oft as yee eat this bread, and drink this cup, yee ſhew the Lords death*, and ſo that is, as oft as ye eat, doe it in this manner. This is the command of God, that wee oft receive the Lords Supper. In the primitive times St. *Baſil* obſerves, that they ate it three or foure times in a week, on Wedneſdayes, Fridayes, and on the Lords day; but that was a time of perſecution, I will not ſtand upon that. I think it not needfull: But it ſhould bee often, wee ſhould not thruſt it only upon Eaſter, and Whitſontide,

The Lords Supper to be received often.

Baſill.

and

and Christ tide, three or foure times in the year.

Again, I might obserue here from this mysterry received, in that he calls it *Bread*, I might obserue against the Papists Transubstantiation, that the bread received, is not transubstantiated, it is bread. And against that of receiving in one kind. *So let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup*: he doth not say, so let him eat of that bread only, but he directs the command in both kinds. But I let this passe, and come to the second thing, that is, the manner how we should doe this duty.

Observ. The manner of performance of duties to be regarded.

So let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

It is not, first let him examine himself, and then let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup: But let him examine himselfe, and then *SO* let him eat: implying, that examining a mans selfe helps, or ought to help a man to a right manner: and when he hath gotten a right manner, then to eat that bread, and drink that cup; that hee may doe not onely for matter that which the Lord commands, but for manner as the Lords commands. Beloved, the Lord stands on circumstances as well as duties: we are all racers, wee run, but we must *so run that we may obtain*, 2 *Cor.* 9. 26. So pray that we may speed, so heare that we may be converted, so reprove that we may be edified; so behave our selves in our places and callings, that we way glorifie God. It is not enough for a man to run, but he must *so run*, if he mean to obtain. Every man will be speaking and doing good things; but *so speake*, and *so doe*, Jam. 2. 12. The Lord calls upon us to have a care of the

2 Cor. 9. 26.

Jam. 2. 12.

the manner of duties, as well as of the matter of duties. It is not enough that a man come to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup, but *ſo* to eat, and *ſo* to drink of it; he muſt partake of the Lords table, and ſo as the Lord enjoynes.

Now the Reaſons of this are:

Reaſ. 1. The Lord commands the manner as wel as matter.

Firſt, becauſe the ſame Lord that commands the matter, commands the manner too. The Lord he will have his ſervice well done, as well as done, he will have the work well performed, as well as performed. It is not onely the thing that the Lord ſtands upon, but the right manner and kind of doing it.

2 Chron. 28.9.

When *David* perſwaded his ſonne *Salomon* to worſhip the God of his Fathers, he bids him not onely doe the thing, but doe it in a right manner, *And thou my ſonne Salomon, know thou the God of thy fathers, and ſerve him.* Is that all? No, but *with a perfect heart, and a willing mind,* 2 *Chron.* 28.9. He commands him to doe it, not onely for the matter of it, but in the right manner of it. A man may ſerve God, but if it be not with a perfect heart, and a willing minde, and with a cheerfull ſpirit; if he be not ready to every command, if he doe not open his eares to every rebuke, a man doth not ſerve God at all. The manner either makes all, or marres all.

Reaſ. 2. Circumſtances overthrow actions, as 1. Prayer.

Secondly, another Reaſon is, becauſe circumſtances overthrow actions, if they bee not rightly and duly obſerved. As for example: In Scripture prayer is an action commanded of God:

God: the Lord commands us to pray, that we call upon his name duly, every day, in all our needs and neceſſities, upon all occaſions continually. But now if we pray not aright, not in that manner that the Lord hath preſcribed; if we pray either with a guilty defiled conſcience, with cold affections, with a dead ſpirit, or without departing from iniquity, or without a pure heart: if a man pray without the right manner of prayer, he marres all his prayer, it is a howling, and not a prayer. *They did not cry to me* (ſaith God) *when they howled on their beds*, that is, when they prayed: but becauſe they did not pray in a right manner, the Lord calls it a *howling*, and not a *prayer*. *We roare as Beares*, in *Iſay* 59. 12. the Prophet nicknames it, ſpeaking in the perſon of the people, he calls it the *roaring of Beares*. The Lord had as lief heare the barking of a Dog, or the grunting of a Swine, as a man that doth not pray aright, with a bleeding heart, with contrition of ſoul and ſpirit, with a *ſpirit of grace and ſupplication*. When a man prayes, and prayes not aright, his prayer leaves that name, it is no more a prayer in Gods account.

Iſai. 59. 12.

2. Preaching.

And ſo preaching, it is an admirable action, but if a man doe not preach aright, if it be *flattering with the enticing words of mans wiſedome*, *or beating the aire*, and to ſhew his owne learning, this overthrowes the action of preaching, hee preacheth not *Chriſt*, but *himſelfe*; *himſelfe*, not the *Goſpel*, though the Goſpell bee in his Sermon all over, yet himſelfe hee preacheth, the

the action is marred, the circumstance marreth it.

So in the Lords Supper, if a man come not prepared, that he have not the *Wedding Garment*, that he be not aright qualified according to the requisites of the Gospel, this is not to eat the Lords Supper. Saith the Apostle, *When yee come together, this is not to eat the Lords Supper*: you think you eat the Lords Supper, you take the bread and the cup, and can say, Blessed bee God, and I pray God blesse it to me: you may come and doe these actions, but the action is altered, the action is diversified when it is not done in a right manner. 3. Receiving the sacrament

So if a man come to reprove his brother, if himselfe be faulty, doe you think this a sufficient reproof? No, it is hypocrisie. *Thou hypocrite*, *Matth.* 7.5. his reproof of his brother is hypocrisie. 4. Brotherly reproof. Mat. 7.5.

So for men to tell one another of their faults, and to tell them with a spirit of bitternesse; this is not Christian dehortation, but *biting one another*, *Gal.* 5.15. Gal. 5.15.

And so for eating and drinking, beloved, eating is lawfull, and drinking is lawfull, and *marrying and giving in marriage*, all these are lawfull, yet if a man eat not aright, and drink not aright, and *marry in the Lord*, and eat and drinke *with title to the Lords creatures*, that hee have interest in the covenant of God, if Christ bee not in it, how shall he have comfort? Nay, the very nature of hs eating is altered, his eating and drink- 5. Eating and drinking.

drinking, and marrying is a ſinne. As our Lord Chriſt ſhewes of the old world, *They did eat and drinke, and were marrying and giving in marriage, till Noah entred into the Ark, and the flood came and ſwept them away*, Matth. 24. 37. He reckons their eating and drinking among their ſinnes, among the reaſons and cauſes why the flood came upon them, they did eate and drink, and marry and give in marriage.

Mat. 24. 37.

Object. You will ſay, Was that the reaſon the flood came? And was that an argument of their ſecuritie? Did not *Noah* eat and drinke and marry? And were not his ſons married that were in the Ark, and he a grand-father?

Anſw. But he did it aright; therefore his eating and drinking is not brought in as a ſigne of ſecurity, but of the old world, that were carnall and wretched people, it was; becauſe they did not eat and drink aright.

This is all very true.

There be Rules in eating and drinking, in talking and diſcourſing, in doing the duties of our callings: There be Rules how you ought to buy and ſell, and to doe every good word and worke: If theſe Rules be not obſerved, the Rules of Gods bleſſed word, the actions themſelves are altered; though the things bee commanded of God, yet they are curſed and abominable things, when the true form and faſhion of them is not regarded, though they be never ſo godly.

Simile. A garment, though it be never ſo good, if the Taylor handle it not well, it is marred in the making, if he bring it not to a right forme, and

and make it in a right manner, the man that is to have the garment, is disappointed. So Timber, though it be never so excellent, though it bee all Oke, or Elm, or whatsoever tree, though it bee never so fit for building, if the Artificer deale not well in handling it, the inhabitant that comes there, may curse the day that ever he came there: If it be not well built, it may fall on his head and kill him, and all that belongs to him. So it is in all the Ordinances of God, and the matters of religion, wee must not onely doe them for matter, but for manner too: for that either makes or marres them.

Thirdly, another Reason is, because onely the right manner of doing duties gets the blessing. A man may pray a thousand times, and never be heard, hee may heare a million of Sermons, and never be converted, a man may come to all the Sacraments in the yeare, all his life long, and never be *sealed against the day of Redemption.* A man may doe the things, and never get the blessing; all the blessing lies in the right manner of doing. *Blessed is that servant, who when his master comes, shall find so doing,* Matth. 24.48. He saith not, *Who when his master commeth, shall find doing.* Christ when he comes to judgement, shall finde many doing; it may be he will come in prayer time, it may bee hee will come in the morning, when many thousands shall be at their prayers in their families: it may be he will come at night, when all are at praier in their houses; it may be he will come on the Sabbath, when all the Countrey is

Reason 3. The right manner of doing duties gets the blessing.

Mat. 24. 48.

is at Church, hearing of Sermons, hee ſhall finde many thouſands doing, and praying. But bleſſed is that ſervant, whom his Lord when hee comes, ſhall find *ſo* praying, *ſo* hearing, *ſo* receiving the Sacrament: He ſhall find many believing, but *ſo* believing gets the bleſſing: many profeſſing, but it is *ſo* profeſſing that gets the comfort. I ſay, all the bleſſings of God are promiſed to the right manner of doing. Now, what is it, when we doe duties, what doe we look for? Is it not for a bleſſing? Why doe we doe the duties, if we doe not doe them ſo as we may get the bleſſing? Now except we obſerve the right manner of doing them, all is to no purpoſe.

Reaſon 4 Chriſts example.

Fourthly, another Reaſon is, the example of Jeſus Chriſt, Chriſt hath given us an example that we ſhould doe as he did: Now hee did not onely doe that which his Father bid him doe, for matter, but for manner, both in all the words hee ſpake, and in all the deeds that hee performed. For the words he ſpake, *As the Father hath ſaid unto me, even ſo ſpeak I*, Joh. 12. And in Joh. 14.31. *As the Father hath given mee commande-me t even ſo doe I*. Mark, he did not onely obey his Father in the matter of his command, but in the manner of it. And as Chriſt hath done thus, ſo all that are Chriſts, all the ſervants of God in all ages, they have been very carefull, eſpecially of the right manner of obeying God. As it is ſaid of *Noah*, Gen. 6. 22. *As the Lord commanded Noah, even ſo did he*, juſt as the Lord commanded him; he did not onely make an Arke, but *ſo* hee made

Ioh. 12. Ioh. 14.31

Gen. 6.22.

made all the roomes: *ſo* hee made it in the ſame forme and figure, and in the ſame ſimilitude, juſt as the Lord ſet him downe the patterne, *even ſo did he.* So the Lord ſets down the patterne of every good word and work, of all our prayers, and Sermons, and hearing, and conference, and keeping the Sabbath, and ſpeaking holily: all our actions have their patterne ſet downe in the word of God. Now as wee are to doe the things, ſo wee are to doe them in the ſame manner, as the Lord commands, even *ſo* muſt we doe.

Fifthly and laſtly, except we doe it in a right manner, except as we come to the dutie. *ſo* we come to the right manner, we can never glorifie God; The glory of God lies in the manner of doing of things. *So let your light ſhine before men, that they may ſee your good workes, and glorifie your Father which is in heaven,* Matth. 5. 16. Mark, the light muſt not ſhine onely in our lives and converſations; but *ſo* that the duty muſt be a means to the glorifying of God. Now the means muſt have its proportion, and likeneſſe, and nature, and mold, and frame, from the nature of the end. Look how the end is that the dutie lookes unto, *ſo* muſt the frame and faſhion of the dutie be: Now if the end of all our actions be, that God may be glorified, that muſt put a forme and faſhion upon every dutie, that it may be *ſo*, that he may have glory. Suppoſe a man pray every day in his family, and call all his houſhold, his ſervants, and wife and children, and all under

Reaſon 5 From Gods glorie.

Matth. 5. 16.

der his roof about him, every morning and evening; he may dishonour God by praying every day on this fashion: if a man pray coldly, and carelesly, for forme and fashion, without faith, and life: he makes all the ordinance of God vile, and all the worke of God contemptible: his household sleeps, one snorts it may be; another is infinitely prophane, it may bee; and though there be divers that would fain be quickned, and wakened, yet his prayer is so cold, there is no life, nor heat, nor warmth in it, that God is exceedingly dishonoured, and all are thereby rather worse then better. So for a mans preaching, though it be never so good a duty, yet hee must labour to preach *so*, as the Apostle speakes of his preaching, and labour in the work of the Ministery, how he may edifie others, and save his own soule. *So fight I, not as one that beats the aire*; but *so as I may get the mastery*: We must *so* preach, that we may attain the conversion of the people; or else we may rather doe as *Hophni* and *Phineas*, the sonnes of *Eli*, that made the Table of the Lord contemptible, and the Sacrifice of the Lord loathsome in the eyes of the people: So may we do with the ordinance of God.

Take any duty of religion, if it be not done aright, God hath no glory by it: Suppose thou wouldest reprove thy brother, and tell him of his fault, and check him for his backwardnesse, or omission of some duty, and for the commission of some sinne; if thou doe not doe it with a spirit of compassion, and bowels of Jesus Christ, with

with an humble heart, with a feeling and a pure conſcience; I ſay, thou getteſt a blot to thy own ſelfe, and cauſeſt God to be ill ſpoken of, and the very way of his name to bee diſhonored: This will be the effect of it; and ſo in every other dutie. And ſo I come to the uſe.

Uſe 1. To reprove thoſe that barely doe duties, without looking to the manner.

Is it ſo, that we muſt not onely come to the Sacrament, but come aright, or doe any dutie, but we muſt do it in a right manner? This ſerves to condemne that naturall Popery that is in mens hearts, that is, of *opus operatum*, of the deed done; this is the religion of the Church of *Rome*, that ſo a man doe the duty (indeed it is better if it bee done in a right manner, but) if it be done, there is ſomewhat a man may look for by that. If a man come to the Sacrament, the very eating of the Hoſt, the very partaking of the body of Chriſt, they make it meritorious: ſo the very hearing of ſo many Sermons, the very ſaying of ſo many prayers, the very performance of ſo many duties, the very thing it ſelfe, nakedly conſidered, it is of ſome validity. This is rooted in the hearts of men, we ſee it up and downe, people doe the duty, and think all is well enough, when they conſider not how it is done. People pray, but not with zeale; they heare, but not with reverence: People come to the Sacrament, not *for the better, but for the worſe*, they come not in a right manner; and yet every one hopes to ſpeed, and builds himſelfe on this, that God accepts of him. But this is the folly of mens hearts; it is an evident argument

that men goe fooliſhly to work in the wayes of God. It is the brand of a foole not to be able to obſerve circumſtances. *Ariſtotle* the heathen, he ſaith, it is the part of a wiſe man to think of, and underſtand the manner of actions; as a wiſe man ſaith, he obſerves circumſtances. It is a part of wiſdome to obſerve the right circumſtances of every action, as it is *Epheſ.* 5. 15. *Walk circumſpectly*, that is, accurately, as it is in the originall, *not as fooles, but as wiſe*. Marke, hee perſwades them to a right manner of walking; not onely to walk in a good courſe, in praying, and hearing, in obedience and ſobrietie, in temperance, faith, and diligence in our callings; but doe it accurately, in a right manner; doe it as wiſe men, and not as fooles, they doe it in a wrong manner. It is the part of a foole, I ſay, to doe a thing, and to leave the right manner of doing it. Now this is nothing with God, the Lord doth not eſteeme any action, though it bee never ſo frequently done, except it bee done with his owne ſtamp, except it have his owne character upon it.

Ariſt.

Epheſ. 5. 15.

I remember a ſtory in 2 *Kings* 17. 26. The Aſſyrians there obſerved, that God ſent Lions among them, becauſe they did not obſerve the right manner of the God of Iſrael: they worſhipped the God of Iſrael; but becauſe they obſerved not the right *Manner* of his word, hee ſent Lyons among them, to teare and devoure them in pieces. So, though we pray, and heare, and read, and profeſſe, and have a name that we live; and though we be taken or good people, & heap

2 Kings 17. 25.

eap up duties from day to day, and vie perfor-
ances; and though we doe them as many times
s the children of God; nay, though we could do
em ten thouſand times oftner then they, yet if
e doe them not in a right manner, if wee know
ot the manner of the God of heaven, and earth,
ith humble hearts, and ſelfe-denying ſpirits,
ith holineſſe of affection, and with puritie of
eart: if a man doe them not in a right manner,
he Lord will teare him in pieces, and hee ſhall
ave no deliverance for all that.

Uſe 2. The reaſon why men regard the matter and not the manner of duties.

Another uſe ſhall be, what may be the reaſons
hy people are ſo willing generally, to doe du-
ies for the matter, and care not to doe them in a
ight manner. It will not bee amiſſe a little to
hew the myſtery of this thing: for we ſee every
an is willing to doe duties, every man will be
raying, and comming to Church, many repro-
ates, and God knows how many carnall hearts
re in this congregation, ſome drunkards it may
e, ſome adulterers, ſome it may be, that com-
itted whoredome the laſt night, ſome that have
een ſwearing even now, and deceiving in their
hops, there are many carnall hearts: yet every
an is willing to do duties, to hear, and to pray.
Now what may be the reaſon that people are
illing to doe good duties, and yet are loath to
ome off with their carnall harts? There are four
reaſons.

Reaſ. 1. The matter of duties eaſie.

The firſt is this, Becauſe the matter of the
dutie is eaſie, but the manner is difficult. It is
an eaſie matter to pray, to ſay, *Lord, I have ſin-*

ned againſt heaven, and againſt thee. Lord, I have ſworne, I have been a drunkard, I have diſhallowed the Sabbath, I have done this and that, I pray thee pardon and forgive me, and give mee thy grace; it is an eaſie matter to doe this. It is eaſie for a man to come to Church, and marke what the Miniſter ſaith, and follow him from point to point, and it may be goe over it to his family. This is good, there are few that come thus far. And ſo it is eaſie to come to the Sacrament, to take the Bread and the Cup, and to pray for a bleſſing, this is eaſie; but when a man comes to a duty in a right manner, here is difficulty, when a man doth it with a *How, Take heed HOW you heare.* He doth not call upon people to hear, that is not the matter; there needs no great diligence for that: but if you will conſider *How* you heare, take heed to that. Here muſt be a great deal of circumſpection; the ſoul muſt be marvellous painfull, a man muſt offer violence to his own ſoul; a man muſt fight againſt his own wil, a man muſt beat down his own ſpirit, he muſt crucify his own thoughts, muſt mortify his own mind, & beat down his own ſoul. It is a hard thing to do it in a right manner, as the Lord commands, if we e conſider now how to doe it. This is certaine, fleſh and blood cannot abide to take pains, if it can ſerve God with eaſe, and pray with eaſe, that it will doe; but for a man to weep before God, for a man to indict his heart to the throne of grace, to rend his bowels before his maker, to teare the caule of his heart upon his knees; for a man

man to vow to God, and pay them; for a man to rid his hands of all the wages of iniquity, for a man to purifie himselfe as Christ is pure, for a man to wrastle with God, and to take grace from the covenant of grace, with life and power to doe it in a right manner: here is religion, and this men cannot abide.

And so for the Sacrament, for a man to come in a right manner, Oh it is difficult to flesh and blood, for a man to goe and examine all his life, to reckon up all his conversation, to anatomize himselfe from his cradle to this moment; to consider how he hath sinned in his calling, in his family, in his shop, in his company, in his speech, and in his life; to goe and judge himselfe for these, and condemne himselfe, and to *accept of his owne punishment*, to goe and wrack his owne thoughts, and crucifie his owne soule: Oh! this is hard, men cannot abide this: therefore they go and take the matter, they observe that, and leave out the manner.

Secondly, another reason is this, - because the matter of duties may be done with a proud heart, there is no duty but a man may do it with a proud heart, and never bee humble. A man may pray, and use good words, and make good petitions, and have marvellous good language, and Scripture phrases, and termes, and passages, and an admirable sweet tone, and yet have a proud heart. A man may come, and preach a Sermon, he may preach so, as that he may strangely affect the hearts of the people, and may make all

Reas. 2. The matter of duties may bee done with a proud heart.

the people wonder and *admire at the gracious words that come from his mouth*, and yet have a proud heart.

A man may heare, and hear oft, and hear the best Preachers in the Citie, and delight in hearing, and yet have a proud heart. A man may come to the Sacrament, and sit, o ones thinking, as devoutly as any in the Church, and pray when the people pray, and give thanks when others give thanks, and have a kind of morall faith in the covenant, and a morall application of the promises, and yet have a proud heart. It is the manner of doing duties that humbles the soule. as St. *Paul* saith, *Acts* 20. *You know in what manner I have been with you.* Why, what was the manner? *In all humility of mind*, saith hee, being among the Ephesians, preaching to them in a right manner, leaving them the example of his own patterne, doing all this in a right manner, he did it in all humility of heart. It is the right manner of prayer that pulls down the heart before God. It is the right manner of hearing the word, that makes a man melt at it. It is the right manner of comming to the Sacrament, that makes a man feele the comfort of God, and the promises of the Gospell, and to seek and find the admirable things contained in it. It is the right manner that makes a man walke lowly with his God.

Acts 20.

Reason 3 The matter of duties may be done, & yet a man be unholy.

Thirdly, another Reason is; Because the matter may stand with an unholy life. A man may doe a dutie for the matter of it, and yet bee unholy.

holy. This is plain; how many thousands are there that pray, and yet are vain, and covetous, and carnall? How many thousands heare Sermons, and yet are unprofitable? *Ever hearing, and never come to the knowledge of the truth.* If they were injurious before, they are injurious still; if they were couseners before, they are so still; if they were drunkards before, they are so still. A man may receive the Sacrament every month, and yet may have his lusts, and roll them as a sweet morsell under his tongue, he may delight in his secret lusts, and goe on in the deadnesse of his heart. It is the right manner of worshipping of God, that purgeth the conscience, and purifieth the soule, and makes a man that there is no room for his corruptions, as you may see, 1 Thess. 2. 10. *You your selves know* (saith the Apostle) *how holily and unblameably we walked among you.* Hee speakes there of his manner of walking, and he saith to them, because it was in a right manner, it was in a holy manner; such walking as excluded all unholinesse and prophaneness. Flesh and blood cannot abide this. Men they love to pray and be proud; they love to hear Sermons, and to have their profit, they love to professe religion, and still to carry their secret lusts in their bosomes. People love this a life, to *goe up to Gilgall and transgresse, to offer sacrifice every new Moon, and every morning, and to find the labour of their hands*, this is right; but for a man to part with his iniquity, that is the thing that goes against the haire.

The

Reason 4. The matter of duties brings not the crosse.

The last reason is, because the matter of duties brings not the crosse upon a man. A man may doe all the duties of religion, and never bee persecuted for it: a man may be as devout as the devoutest man under heaven, and yet no body hate him for it, except he be devout in a right manner, and worship God in a right manner. One man may reprove another that is wicked. A drunkard may suffer a drunkards reproof, and be never the worse: A whoormaster may serve his quean so, he may call her so, and yet not bee spighted, because it is not right. It is the right doing of it that brings the crosse; as in 2 Tim. 2.10. *Thou knowest my manner of life.* It was that that brought afflictions and persecutions.

2 Tim. 2. 10.

We may see to this very day many thousands that seem devout men in the Church, they will pray, and wil hardly misse any time of prayer morning or evening; and yet they are farre from being persecuted: nay, many of them are maine persecuters of the Gospel of God, enemies to the crosse of Christ, adversaries to the Saints of God. We see it plain in *Acts* 13.5. we read there of devout women that raised persecution against *Paul*. Mark, they were devout, and because it was not in a right manner, they persecuted the Apostles, and set themselves against them that were truly faithful. Though wicked men do not love to pray aright, yet many of them are much for praying, they care not how much praying they have; and when they are at prayers, they will pray over from the beginning of the booke to

Act. 13. 5.

to the end, they love it a life. But if they come to a prayer that moves the heart, that rifles the conſcience, that dogges a man into his boſome, that layes a man flat on his face before God, they gnaſh their teeth at ſuch a prayer. So they love preaching too; I, it is true, if it bee preaching that is flaunting, and gloſing, *with the enticing words of mans wiſdome*: butif a man preach to the conſcience, if he preach the pure naked word of God: and carry it home to mens ſoules, this makes them gnaſh their very teeth: and they could eat the Miniſter of God for his labour. It is the right manner of duty that is accompanied with the croſſe.

Uſe 3. To labour to doe duties aright.

Thirdly, if wee ought to bee carefull to perform duties in a right manner, let us be exhorted in the feare of God, to goe and quicken all our duties, to bring a ſoule into ſo many bodies; we have bodies of praying, and bodies of hearing, and bodies of receiving the Sacrament, and of good duties, let us get a ſoule into them, labour to doe them in a right manner. The very ſoule is like a carkaſſe. It is a proverb of the Jewes, *Prayer without preparation, it is as a carkaſſe without a ſoule*, that is, a loathſome thing; ſo is prayer without life, and without a right manner of pouring it forth. Let us labour therefore in the feare of God, to pray, and pray aright, to heare, and to heare aright; to ſeeke God, and to ſeek him with all our hearts, aright, and to doe every thing in the right way.

Let

Motives to perform duties in the right manner.

Let us consider, First, we doe not partake of any ordinance at all, except we doe it in a right manner. I remember a fit place for this in *Num.* 11. 14. It is said there, *The stranger shall eat the passover, and partake of it according to the ordinance, and the manner of it.* Where the Text puts in the *Ordinance* of the Passover, and the *Manner* of it. For it is all one, they are *Synonyma's*. So the *Ordinance* in every duty. Gods ordinance in praying, in hearing the Word, in the Sacrament, in reproof, and in every good dutie, it is all one as the selfe-same thing. So that if we pray, and doe not pray in a right manner, we have not praied, we doe not partake of the ordinance. So when we come to the Sacrament, the ordinance of the manner of it is all one; it is one compleat concrete action, we doe not partake of it, except we partake of both.

1. Numb. 11, 14.

2. Secondly consider, it is nothing but hypocrisie, when a man prayes, and doth not pray in a right manner; when a man doth any dutie to God, and not in the right wise, it is nothing but hypocrisie. Mark how our Saviour Christ sets forth the hypocrisie of the Pharisee, *Luke* 18. 11. *The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himselfe*, he marks his manner of prayer; he doth not say, *He stood and prayed This*, these words, but *Thus* he prayed; he did not pray in a right manner: there was his hypocrisie, and that was the reason he went home not justified.

Luk. 18. 11

3. Thirdly consider, it makes the Ordinance of God of no effect. *Thus they make the Commandements*

Mat. 15. 6.

ments of God of none effect, Matth. 15. 6. Hee ſpeakes there of their duties that they did in a wrong manner, and their expounding the Scripture, that they did in a wrong wiſe; and their ſacrifice, their offerings, and tithings, their precepts, and many things that were all done after another faſhion then God had commanded, therefore ſaith Chriſt, *Thus, they make the Commandements of God of none effect.* So we make all the duties of Gods worſhip of none effect. We know there is never an ordinance of God, but it hath great effect if it bee rightly performed. Prayer is of great effect, it is able to rend heaven, it is able to pull down God to the ſoule, it is able to wraſtle out a bleſſing, to quicken the heart, to obtain of God every thing wee want: but if a man pray not aright, a man may pray, and goe away never a whit the more holy, nor more quickned, nor neerer to heaven, nor comfort. So preaching and hearing, they are admirable Ordinances, what powerfull effects have they wrought when they have been done in a right kind? People have cried out, and been converted at them; and many a man hath been pulled out of the power of Satan to the Kingdome of Jeſus Chriſt. They had royall glorious effects upon many thouſand ſoules. But what is the reaſon that our hearing is ſo ineffectuall? Becauſe we heare not in a right manner, this makes the Ordinance of God of none effect, it makes Prayer of no effect, the Word of no effect, the Sacraments, and Sabbath of no effect;

you

you see people partake of these things, and are never the wiser.

Lastly, it cannot please God, it is onely the right manner of doing duties that pleaseth God, as in 1 Thess. 4. 1. *As yee have received of us How yee ought to walke, and to please God.* Mark, there is the manner, *That yee may know HOW to walk*, and by that to please God. It is not enough for a man to walk in good duties; that a man may doe, and not please God: but (saith he) *yee have received the manner HOW to walk and to please God.* It is the *manner How* that pleaseth God. A man may walke to hell upon heavens ground, hee may goe to hell in the ways of God, it is possible. Suppose a man should go and take (if it were possible) all the surface of ground between this place and York, and lay it between this place and Dover, a man might go to Dover upon York ground. So many a man lays the Ordinances of God in hell way: hee walkes in the way to hell, and there hee layes his prayers, and there his hearing, and his good duties: hee prayes every day, and heares every day, and doth good duties every day, and yet walks to hell; hee goes to hell on heavens ground. The reason is, because hee doth the dutie, and doth not observe the manner how he doth it.

Simile.

The third thing is, the rule of direction, how we may come to the right manner of receiving the Sacrament, that is, by preparing of a mans selfe: and the preparation is here set downe

downe by the ſpecification of it, namely, in examining himſelfe. *Let a man examine himſelfe, and ſo let him eate of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.*

The generall ſcope of theſe words, and the Apoſtles meaning in them, is this, That

Every man muſt prepare himſelfe before he come to the Lords Table.

Obſerv. 3 Every man muſt prepare himſelfe, before he come to the Lords Table.

I cannot ſtand on this, I will onely name it.

As in the Sacrament of the Paſſover, there was preparation to the Paſſover. In Joh. 19. 14. it is ſaid of the Diſciples of Chriſt, that *they made ready the Paſſover.* In Matth. 26, they made the Lamb ready, and the room ready, and themſelves ready, and the Table ready, and every thing ready. So in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, wherein Chriſt is the true Paſchall Lamb, when we come to eate of him, wee muſt make every thing ready, faith ready, and repentance ready, and intereſt in the promiſes ready, and hunger and thirſt after theſe ſpirituall dainties ready, every thing muſt be ready: or elſe, like a man that comes into the field to battell, that hath not gotten his ſword, or his weapons ready, that is the way for himſelfe to bee killed: ſo it is when wee come to the Communion, and have not all things ready, it is the way to be damned.

The reaſons of this are,

Reaſon. It is Gods ordinence.

Firſt, becauſe the Sacrament is an Ordinance of God: Now all the Ordinances of God require preparation, they are all ſpirituall, and naturally a man is carnall, and therefore cannot be prepa-

Simile.

prepared. As it is with wood, there is never a tree in the wood, but it is unprepared for building. Is there any tree in the wood of the fashion of a Chimney, or of a Lintell, or a Doore? It must first be prepared, as it is *Prov.* 24. 27. *First prepare thy work without, and then build thine house.* So every ordinance is to build a man up in the feare of God, in the grace of God, and in Religion: Now man is naturally unprepared for it; First, a man must fell his wood, and then cut it, and hew it even, and carve it, and plane it fit, and prepare it before he build: So a man must hew downe his own heart, he must humble his owne soule, and qualifie all within him, and so be sanctified before hee be fit.

Prov. 24. 27.

As for example: In prayer, a man must bee prepared to prayer before he pray; he must prepare his heart, and then Gods eares will hearken to it. In *Psal.* 10. 17. The Lord will have the heart prepared before he heare the prayer. So it is with the word of God, a man must bee prepared before he heare it: As a man that preacheth must be prepared before he preach, as *Ezra* is said to *prepare his heart, Ezra* 7. 10. *Hee prepared his heart to doe the Law, and to teach it.* So a Minister cannot preach, except he be prepared beforehand, with a commission from God, with preserving knowledge, with a coale from Gods Altar, with a spirit of wisdome and understanding, with a law of kindnesse in his lips, with meditation, and with a Theam fitted in his mouth for the people, hee must bee pre-

Psal. 10. 17.

Ezra 7. 10

prepared with *a burning and a ſhining light*; or elſe hee ſhall not edifie the congregation: So it is with all other ordinances. For humbling of a mans ſoule, a man cannot humble his heart, except he be prepared to it, *Amos* 4. 12. *Prepare to meet thy God*, he ſpeaks of humiliation. If a man would humble himſelf before God, if he be not prepared, if his heart be not prepared to let goe the world, his worldly profits, and vaine pleaſures, and carnall acquaintance, his wonted luſts, and former delights. If hee bee not prepared to let theſe goe, when he comes to keep a Faſt, or to afflict his ſoule, and goes along to doe the dutie, to lay himſelfe down before Almighty God, ſome luſt or other will ſtick in his teeth, and intercept his heart, hee ſhall never be able to doe it: as *Samuel* ſaid to the people; *If you will turn to the Lord, prepare your hearts to doe it*, 1. Sam. 7. So it muſt bee in all the ordinances of God, and much more in the Sacrament.

Amos 4. 12.

1 Sam. 7.

Secondly, another Reaſon is, becauſe the Lord Chriſt hath made great preparations to provide the Lords Supper; therefore wee muſt be prepared to eat it. You know what a great deale of adoe there was before this Supper was made. Chriſt muſt be incarnate, and fulfill all righteouſneſſe, hee muſt conclude it upon his ſuffering; he muſt *tread the Wine-preſſe alone*, and ſuffer himſelfe to be beaten and rejected of God and men, and ſuffer death, *the curſed death of the Croſſe*: all theſe things were concluded upon,

Reaſon 2 Chriſt hath made preparation for us in the L. Supper.

before this holy and blessed Supper was provided. *Come* (saith hee) *I have prepared my dinner*, Matth. 22. Mark, Christ is fain to prepare his dinner, he makes a great Feast: there was great preparation for it; so there must be great preparation of our soules before we can come to this holy banquet. It is true among men, there may be great preparation for a feast, and little or nothing for the eating of it. Sometimes there are two or three dayes preparation for a Feast, and it is eaten presently. The reason is, because man naturally hungers after meat and drink, and he alwayes provides twice or thrice in twenty four houres, for eating and drinking: But the Lords Supper is a spirituall banquet, a man is every day, and houre, and moment, naturally unfit for it; and there is much adoe to put an edge upon mens appetites, and a keennesse upon mens desires, that they may bee fitted and prepared for it.

Reas. 3. Christ lookes for good entertainment.

Thirdly, another reason is, because the Lord Christ, when he administers himselfe in this heavenly mystery, he offers to come into the soule, and he looks for good entertainment; and therefore of necessity there must bee preparation for it. You see when a mortall man, an earthly Prince, or a Noble man comes to another mans house, what a deale of preparation there is to provide for him: there is meat made ready, and purging the house, and sweeping the yard, and trimming up the very pales, and every thing, and making clean all the Chambers, and ridding

Out

out whatsoever fills it, and every thing that is out of order is set in tune, And what will my Lord think? and what will his Majesty think? he will think he is slighted and contemned: And when he comes in, it may be, his owne children shall serve, and his owne wife wait at the Table; and there is running up and down of errands, and a great deale of adoe to give such a one entertainment. There is preparation to entertain a man, as Saint *Paul* said to *Philemon*, *I will that thou prepare me a lodging*: how much more when the eternall God shall come under a mans roofe, and dine with him?

Lastly, because the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, it is a part of Christs last Will and Testament. Now it is a terrible thing when we know our Lords will, and prepare not for the doing of it. Look in *Luke* 12. 48. he that knew it not, did things worthy of stripes; but in vers. 47. *That servant that knew his Lords will, and prepared not himselfe, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes*, that man shall be damned with much damnation: he shall be damned deeper then any body. Dost thou know that the Lords Table, that this blessed Sacrament, it is part of Christs last Testament? and wilt thou not prepare thy selfe for it, to get an humble heart, and labour for a holy life, and seek for a thirsty soule, and vow upon new obedience, and enter into covenant with the Lord Jesus Christ, for a better kind of conversation for the time to come? Wilt thou not goe and examine thine

Reas. 4. It is part of Christs last Testament. Luk. 12. 48. vers. 47.

own ſoul, and goe and reform whatſoever is amiſſe in thy family, in thy place and calling? Wilt thou not doe theſe things to prepare for this holy will of Jeſus Chriſt? thou ſhalt bee damned deeper then any body elſe, becauſe this is a part of Gods laſt Will and Teſtament, and thou knoweſt it, and therefore woe unto thee if thou prepare not for it.

THE DUTIE OF THE REPROVER, AND The Persons reproved,

SET FORTH

In a Sermon preached by that reverend and faithfull Minister of GODS WORD,

WILLIAM FENNER,

Sometimes Fellow of *Pembroke Hall* in *Cambridge*, and late Parson of *Rochford in Essex*.

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THE DUTIE OF REPROVERS.

And Persons reproved,

A Sermon preached by Mr. *William Fenner* Minister of Gods word.

PROV. 29. 1.

He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

THese words, by reason of the ambiguity in the Hebrew tongue, they beare two expositions, and our English can suffer but one.

The first Exposition is this, *Hee that reproveth another, and hardeneth his owne necke, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without*

remedy. The other is, as we have it here translated, *He that being often reproved, hardeneth his necke, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.*

I desire to speake of both these expositions, for feare I should misse the true sense of this Text.

For the first, it is a truth of God every where confirmed in the Scriptures, that hee that reproves another, and yet hardeneth his own heart, hee doth but make a rod for his owne backe, hee pulls sudden destruction upon his owne selfe.

Then secondly, there is no hinderance from the context, but that this may bee the meaning of the text: you know the Proverbs have little or no coherence, except two or three chapters. Indeed there is a coherence in them, but generally through the Proverbs there is none: so that if the text it selfe will beare one exposition as well as another indifferently, the meaning none can tell, onely as it is hit.

Thirdly and lastly, the Text it selfe favours this exposition: for so the word in the Hebrew is, *A man of reproofes, that hardens his owne neck, shall suddenly bee destroyed, and that without remedie.*

Now the Question is, Whether the wise mans meaning here be of the actuall reproofe, the reproving of another; or of passive reproof, this is undetermined which of these is meant.

A man can have no light from the coherence, none

none in the world; and from the text it selfe, there is as much reason why we should expound it one way (even almost) as the other. So that I say, for feare I should let goe the true meaning of the wise man. I desire to speak a little of the active sense, *He that often reproveth another, and yet hardeneth his own neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.* From hence I may observe, that

Observ. 1 A guilty hardned reprover, shall be destroyed.

A reprover (whether a Master or a Minister, or a Magistrate, or a Father, or a private Christian, be he what he will be) *that reproveth another, and yet is guilty himselfe* (either in the same kinde, or else in another, or in any kind) *and hardeneth his own heart in it, that man shall suddenly bee destroyed without remedy.*

Take a Preacher that preacheth strict doctrine to the people, that is very zealous against their sinnes, he is up with hell and damnation against their filthy courses: he preacheth for quickning, but himselfe is not quickned; hee threatneth judgments against hardnesse of heart, and yet he hath a hard heart himselfe; this man pulls destruction upon his owne pate. Hee is like the Pharisees, that imposed *upon others grievous burdens and heavie to be borne, but would not touch them with one of their fingers themselves*, Matth. 23. 4. Matth. 23.

The reason of this is, because

Reason. 1 It is against his office. 1 Tim. 3. 2.

First such a reprover of sinne, it is against his office: the office of a reprover binds him to be blamelesse, as the Apostle speakes, *A Bishop must be blamelesse*, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2. Every Christian should

ſhould be blameleſſe, how much more Miniſters, that beare the office of reprovers, they ſhould be blameleſſe? Nay, if a man, though hee take not the office of a reprover, yet if hee beare the perſon of a reprover (as every private Chriſtian muſt when God calls him to it: for every man may be called to reprove) though he have no authority over another, though hee bee a private man, he may beare the perſon though not the office of a reprover. Now a man muſt be unculpable, and unblameable himſelfe, or elſe he ſinnes againſt his perſon. If a man reprove another for being carnall, himſelfe muſt be ſpirituall, *Gal.* 6. 1. *If any man be overtaken with a fault, yee that are ſpirituall, reſtore him.* The reprover, the exhorter, and admoniſher, muſt be ſpirituall, if hee would draw another to be ſpirituall.

Gal. 6. 1.

Reaſ. 2. He cannot reprove to a right end. Matth. 7. 3

Secondly, ſuch a reprover as is guilty himſelf in that kind, or in any other kind, hee can never reprove to a right end, *Why ſeeſt thou a moat in thy brothers eye, and conſidereſt not the beame in thine own eye? Matth 7. verſ.* 3. Why (ſaith he) to what end? what is that thou lookeſt at, thou art ſevere to eſpye faults in thy brothers eye? To what end doeſt thou reprove him? What is the reaſon? What is the thing thou wouldſt have, that thou finddeſt fault with him? *Why ſeeſt thou a moat in thy brothers eye?* As if hee ſhould ſay, thy end can never be good, it cannot be to doe thy brother good; for then thou wouldeſt doe thy ſelfe good firſt: It is not becauſe thou hateſt ſin; for

for then thou wouldest detest thy owne sinne. It cannot be out of a good principle, or to a good end. It is either because thou art a busie body in other mens matters, or thou art censorious, thou lovest to be medling; or because thou hatest thy brother, and wouldst wreak thy malice on him; thou wouldest fain shame and disgrace him, and by beating him downe, get thy selfe up; or thou wouldest get a cover to thy owne conscience; it must be some such end, it cannot be a good end. Christ puts it to a mans conscience, why hee reproves his brother, when hee is faulty himselfe.

Reas. 3. Nor in a right manner. Matth. 7. 4

Thirdly, another Reason is, such a reprover can never doe it in a right manner, as Christ saith, *Matth.* 7. 4. *How wilt thou say to thy brother, let me pull the moat out of thine eye, when behold a beam is in thine own eye?* How wilt thou doe it? In what fashion, or fore? How wilt thou be able to bring this about? A man that is a reprover, had need to have a very cleare sight of his own, that sees another mans faults, and will set another to rights, he had need to have a good judgment, to see all the the circumstances of reproof, and rebuke, that deals with another. As long as a man hath a beam in his owne eye, as long as he hath lusts in his own heart, that will blind his judgment, and darken & cover his eyes, and make him that he shall not be able to see to goe about it. How canst thou possibly say to thy brother, let me pull the moat out of thine eye, when there is a beam in thine own eye?

A man that is to reprove another, a Maſter that will reprove his ſervant, or a Father his children, or a Miniſter that will reprove his people, or a Magiſtrate that will reprove thoſe that are committed to his charge, or any brother that will reprove another, hee muſt doe it with a ſpirit of compaſſion, with bowels of pitie, with a ſenſe and feeling: there is a great deale of wiſedome and diſcretion to bee obſerved in this act. Now when a man hath a beam in his owne eye, how ſhall he be able to doe it? That man that is faulty and guilty himſelfe, either he muſt reprove too harſhly, and rigorouſly, or too ſparingly, or too inſultingly, hee muſt doe it in a wrong manner, it can never bee ſincerely and truly done, as long as a man hath a luſt in his owne heart, and hee himſelf is guilty and faulty, that is a reprover of his brother. Nay, the party reproved, is holpen to retort on him, How doſt thou tell me of pride, and worldlineſſe, and covetouſneſſe? Who ſo proud and covetous as thou? Thus a man ſhall be ready to be hit in the teeth.

Reaſ. 4. It is hypocriſie.

Fourthly, ſuch a reprover is an hypocrite. It is no Chriſtian reproofe for a man to do ſo. Wilt thou goe and finde fault with thy ſervant for his lazineſſe in thy ſervice, when thou art lazie in Gods ſervice? Wilt thou find fault with thy brother for his pride, and thou art full of faſhions? Wilt thou condemne the ſinnes of the times, and thou liveſt in ſome luſt? This is nothing but hypocriſie. Thou makeſt as if thou didſt

didst stand so much for obedience to God; and oh! there is this and that sin against God, when thy selfe is a sinner in that, or in another kind, this is hypocrisie, as Christ saith here, *Thou hypocrite, first cast the beam out of thine owne eye, and then thou shalt see clearly to cast the moat out of thy brothers eye. Thou hypocrite*: Mark, it is an act of hypocrisie when a man goes to finde fault with another, before he has gone to redresse his owne soule; to purge his owne conscience, and have shook hands with *the wages of iniquity* his owne selfe, before a man have done this, it is hypocrisie to deale with another. For when a man reproves another, he takes a forme upon himselfe of one that is zealous against sinne, and an enemy to all sinfull practises: Now what is this but hypocrisie, when a man hath not this in him that he pretends? when a man finds fault with anothers pride, as if he were humble forsooth, with anothers worldlinesse, as if hee were liberall; when a man doth so, he incurres the guilt of hypocrisie in reproving another.

Reas. 5. It makes inexcusable.

Fifthly, another Reason is, because such a reprover is inexcusable, his reproving of another mans sinne, makes him inexcusable for his owne, as the Apostle speakes, *Rom.* 2.1. *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art, that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy selfe, for thou doest the same thing.* Marke, thy owne mouth shall condemne thee; thou findest fault with another mans pride: it seemes he is to be condemned for it, then God con-

condemnes thee for thy pride. Thy pride is a faire mark for Gods justice, because thou condemnest another. Dost thou find fault with anothers hardnesse of heart, and ill will and backwardnesse to any thing that is good, and yet thou art backward? Thou exposest thine owne soule to the judgement of God; thou hast taught (as it were) Almighty God how to condemne thee for thy own lusts and corruptions.

Reason 6 It is absurd. Rom. 2. 21.

Again sixthly, another Reason is this, because such a reprover is an absurd person, it is absurd to reprove another, and be faultie ones selfe, as it is *Rom.* 2. 21. *Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thy selfe? Thou that preachest another should not steale, doest thou steale?* This is a strange absurd thing, this reproofe doth not sound well in thy mouth: thou stealest, and forbiddest stealing; thou preachest against adultery, and committest it; thou speakest against such and such sinnes, thou findest fault with them in the children of God, and art guilty thy selfe, or in thy children or servants, or neighbours, and art obnoxious to them in thine owne practice: this is an absurd thing: these rebukes and reproofes sound not well out of thy mouth.

Reas. 7. It is impudencie.

Lastly, it is a signe of impudencie, *Psal.* 50. *What hast thou to doe to take my covenant into thy mouth, when thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast my covenant behind thy back?* And to the wicked God saith, What hast thou to doe to take my statutes, or covenant, into thy mouth, since thou hatest instruction? What hast thou to doe to re-

reprove thy brother? If hee bee proud, what is that to thee, as long as thou art proud thy selfe? thou goest and flingest stones at him, fling them at thine owne heart first. It is a signe of impudencie.

But it may be objected, Shall not a wicked magistrate punish sinne, and a wicked Minister preach against the corruptions of the times, and a wicked master rebuke his servants, and a wicked father correct his children? Because he is wicked himselfe, shall hee make himselfe more wicked, and contract more guilt upon his soule? *Object.*

I answer, That such a man is in a dilemma; for the man is bound to reprove, in regard of his office, and yet he is bound in conscience to goe and amend himselfe first. I say, he is bound to reprove all those that God calls him to reprove, in regard of his office: but in regard of conscience hee is bound to goe and amend his own fault first. Therefore if it be a Magistrate, such as sit upon life or death, or *Nisi prius*, or any action between man and man, if he condemne a malefactor, and there remember himselfe guilty, hee is bound in conscience to rise from the Bench, and goe and amend his own sinne. And wee that are Ministers, when we preach to the people, and remember our selves guilty, let us lay our hands upon our mouthes, at least *in votis*, before ever we have the face to go and find fault with the people, it is necessary it should bee so. Therefore, I say, a man is in a dilemma, if he doe *Answer.*

not

not reprove sinne, it is against his office, and the person he beares, when God calls him to it; and if he doe reprove, then hee sinnes against the command of God, that bindes him to bee blameleſſe that is to beare the place of a reprover.

Vſe 1. The uſe of this is, firſt, to let us ſee, that a man that reproves (I ſpeake not of Miniſters onely, or of Magiſtrates, or Fathers, but of every man that reproves, either by tongue, in word, or in thought, if hee finde fault in his thought with another man for his ſinnes, and his ſtrange doings) let him take heed, hee doth but pull a judgement upon his owne head; he makes himſelfe inexcuſable, as in *Rom.* 2. 3. the Apoſtle there ſpeaking of this very point, *Thinkeſt thou, O man, that judgeſt him that doth theſe things, and doeſt them, that thou ſhalt eſcape the judgement of God?* A man that judgeth another, and doth the ſame things, that man certainly ſhall not eſcape the judgement of God, as his brother doth not eſcape his judgement.

Rom. 2. 3.

Vſe 2. To be unblameable ere we reprove. Secondly, another uſe ſhall be for counſell to every man and woman (for it is every ones caſe, God hath called every one of us to reprove one another, Miniſters to reprove the people, and Magiſtrates to judge between man and man, and every neighbour is to reprove when he is called thereto. Now) let us marke and obſerve this rule, let every one of us labour with all care and conſcience, to be unblameable, unoffenſive, to goe humble our own ſoules, to cleanſe our own con-

conſciences, that we may be able to perform this duty. Beloved, we wrong our own ſoules, if we find fault with others, and ſuffer our ſelves to bee faulty.

When *Paul* was to preach to the people, knowing that his office of preaching required reproving, you ſee leſt he ſhould wrong his own ſoul, how he laboured to be unblameable, ſaith he, *I beat my body downe, when I preach to others, leſt I become a caſt-away.*

Again, as a man wrongs his owne ſoule, ſo he diſhonours God. It cannot be unknown what an unthankfull office the office of a reprover is; the world cannot abide reproof. *The wicked hate the reprover in the gate*, Iſa. 29. 21. The world is full of ſcorners, that hate repr o fe, *Prov.* 15. 12. Though ſome men be not ſo wicked as to hate reproofe, yet at leaſt they think hardly of them that reprove; they think they uſurp authority over them, and crow over them, or they undertake to bee their betters; as a reprover undertakes in that thing to bee a mans better. Now when a man is reproved, he is apt to think, that his neighbour crowes over him, and exerciſeth authority upon him, as if he would grow on him, and be his Iudge. You ſee *Lot* when he reproved the Sodomites, though as gently as ever he could, *My brethren, doe not ſo wickedly*, preſently for all that they thought hardly of him. *What, will this fellow be a judge that came but theother day to ſojurn?* Gen. 19. Preſently they thought hardly of him. So we ſee the Prophet, hee doth but finde fault

Iſai. 29. 21
Prov. 15. 12.
Gen. 19.

with *Amaziah* for his fault, and presently the Kings eyes are blinded, and his heart hardened, *Who made you of the Kings counsell?* 2 *Chron.* 25. 15. hee thought him a medler, that pried into State-affaires, and into the Court and Kingdom. A man cannot reprove his brother for his sinne, but it is a thousand to one, if his brother bee not ready presently to pry into him, and to look narrowly into his wayes, to espy a hole in his coat if he can, or to make one if he cannot: all mens eyes are upon him, and they looke strictly and straitly; and if any thing in the world be amisse, they will be sure to mark it, and to make more of it, to make mountaines of mole-hills. When the blind man did but find fault with the Pharisees, and reprove them a little for persecuting of Christ, what say they? *Art thou altogether conceived and born in sinne, and wilt thou teach us?* Joh. 9. 34. Presently they looked on his blindnesse, and birth, Certainly he is a viler sinner then other men, and shall he goe find fault with them? If we mean to reprove another, let us labour to be unblameable, to be godly and holy, to reform our own wayes, let us be sure to purge our owne families, to cleanse our own soules, to rid our owne hands of all the wayes of sinne and iniquity, lest God be dishonoured. The word of God will be flung in his own face back againe, and the reproofe, if it be never so sweet, and never so wise, it will be retorted in a mans own teeth, if hee be not unblameable himselfe. And a man had need to be humble, and lowly, and gentle, and

2 Chron. 25. 15.

Joh. 9. 34.

and meek, and to put on all bowels and gentleneſſe of heart, if he will reprove.

All ſinnes are not to be reproved alike, ſome with ſharpneſſe, ſome with lenity. Hee that is a Mountebank that will open a veine for every wheale and pimple. The reprover is like them in *Iſaiah*, when they deale with the Cummin and Fetches, a little rod will beat them out, but when they come to the Corne, Wheat and Rie, they beat them out with the Cart-wheele: So when wee meet with a hard-hearted ſpirit, wee muſt uſe ſtronger corroſives to them, and gentler admonitions and rebukes towards others that ſinne with a leſſer & weaker hand. But this is a thing that a man muſt bee marvellous careſull that reproves. Nay, let a man bee unblameable for the preſent, if he have been faulty before, if it were ſeven, or ten, or twenty yeares before, if it be knowne, it is a thouſand to one, but he ſhall be hit in the teeth with it when he reproves: you committed adultery, and you did ſteale at ſuch a time, if it were never ſo long agoe. Therefore St. *Paul* would not conſent to take *Mark* with him in the miniſtery, *Acts* 15. becauſe hee had beene offenſive to the Church before. We had need be marvellous careſull and wary if wee will reprove.

Simile.

Acts 15.

I had thought to have named other Uſes, but I leave this Expoſition, and take it as it is paſſively interpreted.

He that being often reproved, hardeneth his necke, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedie.

The second exposition.

THough it may be expounded the other way, yet I rather incline to this. The reason is, Because this is the constant current of all Interpreters generally. I meet but with one or two that expound it the other way; but all passively, *He that being often reproved, hardeneth his necke, &c.*

Secondly, because the word in the originall is, *A man of reproofs that hardeneth his own neck.* Now, though it be indifferent whether it bee active or passive, yet look in the Scripture, and you shall finde it more often passive then active. *A man of reproofes*, that is, a man often reproved, in the passive. As in *Isay* 53.3. Christ is *a man of sorrows*, not making others sorry, but made sorrie passively. And so in *Dan.* 9.23. It is said *Daniel* was *a man of desires*, that is, not a man desiring other men, or other things, not actively, desiring; but passively, desired, beloved of God exceedingly. So it is said of *Jeremiah*, *Jerem.* 15.10. hee was *a man of strife*, not a man striving with others, but a man striven with. So in 1 *King.* 2.26. *A man of death*, that is, not killing others, but to be killed himselfe. It is taken more frequently in the passive sense; so we may more boldly take it so. *A man of Reproofes*, that is, reproved againe and again, that hath received divers reproofes, and yet *hardeneth his own necke, shall suddenly bee destroyed,*

Isai. 53.3.

Dan. 9.23.

Jer. 15.10.

2 King. 2. 26.

destroyed, and that without remedy. Here I might obserue by the way, this point of Doctrine, That,

The Lord doth not destroy man willingly.

He saith not, A man shall be destroyed without remedy; but a man when hee hath sinned against God, when he hath committed sinne, and not onely so, but when hee is reproved for his sinne, and goeth on. The Lord doth not destroy a man nakedly, but upon consideration of sinne. *Willingly the Lord doth not afflict any,* Lament. 3. Mercy and punishment they flow from God, as the hony and the sting from the Bee, the Bee yeeldeth hony of her own nature, but shee doth not sting but when she is provoked: so the Lord is gracious, and good, and favourable, and kind, and blesseth his people from his own nature, but he doth not punish, and plague, and destroy, but being provoked by sinne and iniquity. I will not stand to follow this point, I let it go.

Doctrine. The Lord doth not destroy men willingly.

God destroyes not but for sin. Lam. 3. *Simile.*

The text it selfe contains the great mercie of God in lending a man a reproof.

And what a great sinne it is, what a great ill it is for a man to sinne against his reproof. The greatnesse of the ill is set down two wayes:

First, by the great sinfulnesse of the thing, it is called *the hardening of a mans own neck.*

Secondly, by the greatnesse of the punishment that God inflicts upon this sinne, and that is, he will destroy him, and without remedy.

Observ. A great mercy to be reproved.

For the first, namely, what a great mercie it is for God to let a man be reproved of his sinnes.

It may bee proved by many places of Scripture, onely I find in Scripture it is brought as an aggravation of ſinne when they ſinned againſt reproof, *Hoſea* 5. 2. ſaith hee, *they are profound to commit ſinne, though I have been a rebuker of them all.* As if he ſhould ſay, though I have been ſo merciſull as to ſhew them the danger of ſinne, to tell them what would come of their wretched courſes: though I have called them to repentance, and have given them warning what would be the iſſue of theſe things; yet for all this, for all my mercie, they have gone on in their ſinnes though I have reproved them. This *Though* is a word of aggravation, as we ſee in the ſpeech of *Daniel* to *Belſhazzar*; *Thou, O King, haſt not humbled thy ſelfe though thou kneweſt this*: as if he had ſaid, though the Lord let thee know the puniſhment upon thy father, and the plagues of *Nebuchadnezzar* thy grandfather, though the Lord have let thee underſtand what it is for thee to exalt thy ſelfe againſt him; yet thou art not humbled: he aggravates his ſinne. So, this aggravates a mans ſinne when he goes on, notwithſtanding he is reproved. The reaſons are,

Hoſea 5.2.

Reaſ. 1. Reproofes come from love.

Firſt, becauſe when God reproves a man of ſinne, the reproofe primarily comes out of love; therefore when he reproved *Laodicea*, and told her ſhe was luke-warme, and ſaid, *I would thou wert either hot or cold*: And ſince ſhe was neither, he would ſpue her out of his mouth; he tells her whence the reproof flowed; becauſe *I love I reprove*: *As many as I love, I rebuke*, Rev. 3. 19. It is

Rev. 3. 19.

not

not out of ill will that I tell thee of thy lukewarmneſſe, and threaten to ſpue thee out of my mouth; I tell thee theſe things that thou mayſt avoid that ill. I ſay, Gods reproofes flow primarily from love to men, whereby hee would have them lay aſide their wretched courſes, and avoid the judgements. Nay, it is an argument of hatred when a man doth not reprove his brother of ſinne. If God let a man goe on in ſinne, and never tell him of his drunkenneſſe, nor never find fault with his pride and ſecurity, never convince him, or wound, or touch him, nor deal with him about his unſetled eſtate, and his rotten condition, it is a ſigne God hates the man: but when God reproves a man from day to day, Man, thou art a proud creature, thou ſhalt to hell for thy pride, and hypocriſie, and ſecuritie, and hardneſſe of heart: When the Lord reproves a man from day to day, this is an argument of love; the other is an effect of hatred, not to reprove. *Thou ſhalt not hate thy brother in thy heart,* ſaith *Moſes, but ſhalt in any wiſe reprove him, and not ſuffer ſinne to be upon him,* Levit. 19. 17. Thou hateſt thy brother when thou ſeeſt him ſinne, and doeſt not warn him, and knoweſt he is guilty of ſinfull courſes, and doeſt not reprove him; and when thou haſt time, and place, and opportunity, and fit circumſtances to reprove, and yet thou wilt not doe it, it is a ſigne thou hateſt thy brother; it is the greateſt degree of hatred one of them. If a man deny food for the body, and let a man rather die of hunger, then hee will give

Levit. 19. 17.

him meat, or let a man fall into a pit, rather then he will prevent the mischiefe, a man is guilty of bodily murther: but thou art guilty of the soule of thy brother, if thou let him fall into sinne. Thou thinkest thy brother is harsh, hee will not beare with thee, he is hasty and testy: no, thou art in an error, *That man that hates reproofe, erreth*, saith *Salomon*. Indeed a man should not bee too sharp, but first tell his brother in private that hee is in an errour: for reproofe is a means of grace, it flowes from great love, it is the providence of God that hath cast it about, that thou shouldest have reproof given thee; if thou have a heart to take it, it is an argument of love.

Prov. 10. 17.

Reas. 2. They tend to good.

Another reason is taken from the primary end of reproof, which is to bring a man to good, to reduce him into a right way, to convert a man, to save his soule, that is the primary end of reproof and admonition; therefore to goe on in sinnes contrary to it, must needs be a great evill. As *Salomon* brings in the wisdome of the Father, Jesus Christ, calling upon people, *O yee fooles, how long will yee love folly? turne at my reproofe.* Mark what followes, to what end; *I will poure my spirit on you.* There is the end hee tells them. *O yee fooles*, wretched people without understanding, that goe on in sinne, and harden your owne hearts, that repent not, nor turne not to God, that will not submit to his wisdome, nor imbrace his word: *yee fooles*, that wrong your own souls, *oh turn at my reproofe.* Why? This is the reason that God reproves a man on this fashion, it is

that

that a man may have the Spirit of God granted him. If thou have an eare to heare reproofe, and a heart to drink it in, and to weare it as a crown of gold on thy head, and as a chaine about thy neck, thou ſhouldeſt have the Spirit of God for thy labour: the Lord reproves thee that thou mighteſt returne back, and have his Spirit, and have mercie and forgiveneſſe. This is all the ill will that Gods Miniſters beare thee, and all the hatred that reprovers ſhew, when they tell thee of thy ſinnes whatſoever they be, that they may ſtop thy ſteppes from going downe to Hell.

When the Lord ſends thee Sermon upon Sermon, Preacher after Preacher, thou art called on day by day, (as you here in this place) This is the infinite goodneſſe of God toward your ſouls; therefore your ſinne is infinite great, if you doe not amend, as the wiſe man ſaith, *He that hates reproofe ſhall ſurely die, Prov.* 15. 10. there is no remedy for that man; that man that puts off repentance, God reproves him from day to day, on the Sabbath day, and on the week dayes, hee goes to this man, and there hee is reproved; and to another, and there he is reproved; and yet he goes on in this deadneſſe and formality in the ordinances of God, that man ſhall ſurely die, there is no remedy, he ſins againſt the infinite mercie of God. Pro. 15. 10

Thirdly, there is no reaſon in the world why reproofe ſhould be taken otherwiſe then with all willingneſſe, and thankfulneſſe, and chearfulneſſe. *Reaſ.* 3. It is bruiſh to reprove them.

fulneſſe. If a man have but the reaſon of a man in him, hee muſt needs take reproofe in good part, he muſt be a beaſt that doth not judge well of him that reproves him. There is an excellent place, *Prov.* 12. 1. *He that puts off reproofe, is brutiſh*; he that hates reproote is a brute, that man hath no reaſon in him. Art thou a ſwearer, and art reproved for it? thy brother tells thee thou wilt be damned for it. Doeſt thou chafe at that man? thou art a beaſt, thou haſt no more underſtanding then an Ox or an Aſſe. As it is with a Horſe when the Oſtler comes to rub him, he kickes with the heele; when he onely beats off the dirt, he lifts up his hinder legge on him, and it may be wounds him: ſo thou haſt no more underſtanding then a beaſt that finds fault with one that reproves thee for thy ſinnes. So that whatſoever thy ſinne be, he that tells thee of it, there is no reaſon in the world but he ſhould be a dear man to thee. Me thinkes of all men under heaven, godly Miniſters that are faithfull in their place and calling, ſhould be the deareſt men to you upon the face of the earth. Why? becauſe they reprove you, and tell you of your ſinnes, and what will become of your ſouls, what will bee the iſſue and Cataſtrophe of all your wayes. You that come to Church every day, may read a Lecture in the word of God, what will bee your doom at the laſt day: you are told of your pride, and adultery, of your whoredome and oathes, carnall Goſpellers of their ſecure and carnall condition, and common profeſſors of their formality,

Prov. 12. 1

Simile.

mality, and other luſts that men are given to; you are told of all: I ſay, the feet of Gods meſſengers ſhould be beautifull, you ſhould hug the meſſengers, and put their reproofes in your boſomes, and let them have power and efficacie on your ſouls; and goe and put them in practice.

The uſe of this is,

Firſt, is it ſo, that it is the infinite mercie of God to reprove men of their ſinnes, to tell them of whatſoever is amiſſe in their hearts and lives, let mee tell you, Firſt ſee here what an infinite puniſhment God is bringing upon that Kingdome when hee is taking away reprovers from them: when God takes away reprovers, he takes away all mercie and loving kindneſſe. Therefore God when hee threatned to deliver up *Judah*, to curſe that kingdome, to plague them for their rebellion, and utterly to give them over, he ſaith he will take away the reprover, ſaith he to the Prophet, *Thou ſhalt be dumb, and not open thy mouth, thou ſhalt not be a reprover to this people*, *Ezek.* 3. 26. When the Lord would curſe that people, and bind them over to a reprobate ſenſe, and deliver them to wrath, the Prophet ſhall not be a reprover, he ſilences the Prophet. Or as *Piſcator* thinkes, the * anger of God ſilenced him, or confined him to his houſe, that he ſhould not propheſie. So when God ſilences his Miniſters, that he takes them from a place, or threatens to take them away, it is a ſigne of heavie vengeance toward ſuch a people. It may be wicked people laughed at them, and made it a matter

Uſe 1. The miſery to want reprovers.

Ezek. 3. 26

* or Angel

ter

ter of nothing, they were glad that *Ezekiels* mouth was gagged, and it were no matter if the countrey were rid of a company of Puritans; though they had no such word then, they had as bad, they think all is well: but the time will come that they will curse the day that ever they provoked God to take away their Ministers; we enjoy them by the mercie of God, other places have lost them, God knows how soon wee may lose ours. In *Hosea* 4. 4. the Lord there when he would set out the desperate estate of the children of *Ephraim*, he delivers them up to such a state and condition, that none should reprove them, *Let none reprove another*. If they will sinne, let them; if they wil go on in idolatry, let them; if they will harden their own hearts, let them; if they will die in sinne, let them; if they will perish, and bee damned for ever, let them. *Let no man reprove another*. It is a lamentable state.

Hosea 4.4.

Generally people are glad when the Land is swept of all the good Ministers, & the good servants of God: they had rather heare a fine song in a pulpit, of one that preacheth morally, or it may be preacheth his owne selfe, or the like: but the time will come, when they shall say as *Salomon* saith, *It is better to heare the reproofe of the wise, then the song of fooles, Eccles.* 7. 5. People love alife to heare the song of fooles. When a foole comes up and preacheth, *At what time soever a sinner shall repent of his sinne*: And, *Bee not just over much*; and what need such adoe? Here is more puther then needs, and abuse places, and wrest

wrest Scriptures. As for example, the thiefe on the Crosse was saved at the last with a word or two; and they bring the example of the Publican, that cried, *God be mercifull to me a sinner*, and went justified to his house rather then the Pharisee that made long prayers. And tush, what need men be so zealous, and precise, and puritanicall, *Whosoever calls upon the Name of God, shall be saved*: people love alike such songs of fooles: but the time shall come when peoples eyes shall be opened, and their consciences awakened, and then they will wish, O that we had heard the reproofe of the wise.

Use 2. Against despisers of reproof. Prov. 1.30

The second use makes against those that despise the reproofe of the wise, *yea despise not men, but God; Yee have dispised me, Prov.* 1.30. You think you despise a poore Minister, he is strict, & harsh with your souls, and presseth these things upon your conscience, and it may bee, more then he hath warrant to doe; so you think you do not despise God, but one onely Minister: Nay, saith Christ, *you have despised my reproofe*. When you despise them that Christ sends, you despise him. This is an expresse and an explicite signe of a mans everlasting destruction, when he despiseth reproofe: as in that speech of the Prophet to *Amaziah, I know that the Lord hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast not hearkened to my reproofe*, 2 *Chron.* 25.16. So I may say, I know that God hath determined to destroy a Nation, a Citie, or a people, when they will not take counsell of Gods Messengers, when they will not hearken

2 Chron. 25.16.

hearken to inſtruction: They have been called upon, nationall ſinnes have been ripped up, parochiall ſinnes have been ſpoken of, yet when they are told, they will not be reproved. We that are the Miniſters of God, know that God wil deſtroy as many as turn not at reproof. I let this paſſe.

The grievouſneſſe of ſtanding out againſt reproofe.

I ſhould now ſhew the grievouſneſſe of this ill of ſtanding out againſt reproofe: it is expreſſed two wayes:

Firſt, in the ſinfulneſſe of it, to *harden a mans heart.*

Secondly, in the puniſhment, *He ſhall be deſtroyed without remedy.* And in the deſtruction you may ſee here,

Firſt, the unexpectedneſſe of it, *Hee ſhall bee deſtroyed ſuddenly.*

Secondly, to the totalneſſe of it, *Hee ſhall bee deſtroyed.* The word ſignifieth to ſhatter all in peeces.

Thirdly, the irrecoverableneſſe of it, *without remedy.*

Forrthly, the ſutableneſſe of it, his puniſhment is according to his ſin: Mark, as he hardened his own heart againſt God, ſo God will harden his heart againſt him: As no remedy would turne him from his ſinne, ſo no remedy ſhall turn God from his wrath: As his ſin was in hardening his heart like a ſtone, ſo God ſhall deale with him as a ſtone is dealt with, he ſhall deſtroy him. The word in the originall ſignifies broken to peeces, as a ſtone is broken, that is, the Lord will

will deale with him juſt in his owne kind. Hence I might obſerve this doctrine, that

The Lord proportions puniſhments to mens ſins.

Doctrine. God proportions puniſhments to ſins. 2 Sam. 24. 15.

Juſt as a mans ſin is, ſo is the puniſhment. *David* ſinned in numbring the people, 2 *Sam.* 24. 15. and God puniſhed him in that. *Pharaoh* ſinned in deſtroying and drowning the males of the Iſraelites, God ſmote his firſt born: Hee drowned their babes, and he himſelfe was drowned in the ſea. I might bring abundance of examples.

Now the Reaſons of this are,

Reaſ. 1. To ſhew the equity of the puniſhment.

Firſt, becauſe hereby a mans puniſhment appeares to be ſo much the more equall, and worthy. Retaliation is a moſt equall puniſhment to the ſin; there is no inequality in it but this, that it is too merciſull, *An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, burn for burn, wound for wound.* You know an eye is equall for an eye: ſo when God puniſheth a man juſt in his own kind, *quid* for *quo*, that as there was no no remedy would turn him from his ſin, ſo there ſhall bee no remedy ſhall turne God from his wrath. Herein Gods puniſhment appeares to be moſt equall, *Revel.* 16. 5. 6. *Thou art righteous, O Lord, in that thou judgeſt thus: for ſhee hath ſhed the blood of thy Saints, therefore thou haſt given them blood to drink, for they are worthy.* Thou thirſtedſt after blood, there it is for thee: ſo this is moſt equall, when men have dealt thus and thus with God, when God ſhall deal ſo & ſo with thee, thou canſt not find fault. When a man drinks as he brewes, and reaps as he ſowes, and findes as he brings, what inequality

lity is here? *It shall come to passe, that as when I called they would not heare, so when they call, I will not answer*, Zach. 7. When God calls upon thee, and thou wilt not heare, afterwards when thou calleſt for mercie, if he doe not heare thee, it is juſt. Zach. 7.

Reaſon 2 It ſtops a mans mouth.

Secondly, another reaſon is, becauſe this ſtops a mans mouth, it convinceth a mans conſcience; when a mans conſcience finds that he is ſerved in his own kind, that he is paid in his own coin, it ſtops his mouth. As *Adonibezek* he had cut off the thumbs and toes of 70. Kings: afterwards hee was ſerved juſt ſo as he had dealt with others, he had cut off their thumbs and toes, and made them gather orts under his table; ſo afterwards his thumbs and toes were cut off. Now mark what his conſcience ſaith, *Iudg.* 1.7. *As I have dealt, ſo God hath dealt with me.* As if hee had ſayd, God knowes wherefore the children of *Iudah* have done this: they know not why they cut of my thumbs, and the reaſon why they cut off my toes, God knowes what they looked at in puniſhing me thus: but Gods juſt providence hath dealt thus with me, in this kind I ſerved others. This is ſo palpable a puniſhment, ſo equall and juſt, that though the ſin were committed twenty yeares agoe, yet a mans conſcience will finde out his ſin twenty yeares after. As *Ioſephs* brethren they ſold him, and after caſt him into a pit, two and twenty yeares after, when *Ioſeph* was harſh with them, ſee what their conſcience ſaith; *Doubtleſſe wee are guilty of our brothers blood, when we* Judg. 1.7.

we ſaw the anguiſh of his ſoule, and he beſought us, and we would not heare. As if they had ſaid; What is the matter why the man is thus harſh? he never ſaw us before, why ſhould hee bee ſo harſh, and wee bee ſtrangers? Nay, ſaith conſcience, you are well ſerved, remember you were harſh to your brother; if you dealt ſo with him, marvell not if you be dealt ſo with. And after, when they came to their Inne, and found their mony, they wondred, *What is this that God hath done?* Their conſcience, I warrant you, hit them in the teeth: without doubt they thought the mony that they took for ſelling of their brother, had humbled them as a Ghoſt: Did not wee pay the man mony for his corn that we bought? Nay, ſaith conſcience, you are rightly ſerved, here is the mony you ſold your brother for, (though it were not ſo) without doubt conſcience upbraided them. Naturally wee are apt to find fault with Gods judgements, and quarrel, but when conſcience ſees the equity of them, we have nothing to ſay.

Thirdly, all the ſtanders by may ſee the equity of it, when the puniſhment is according to the ſinne: Nay, Divinity makes this argument, that there is a God to judge the earth, becauſe men are puniſhed in their owne kinde. I will ſhew you one example of *Abimelech*, that wretch, that ſlew ſeventy of his brethren upon one ſtone, *Judg.* 9. 7. afterwards when hee came to ſtand under the tower of *Abel*, a woman flung a piece of a milſtone upon his head, and killed him:

Reaſ. 3. That others may ſee the equity of it.

Iudg. 9. 7.

This was ſtrange, all the ſtanders by might ſay, that *Abimelech* ſhould be killed with a ſtone: no queſtion the woman thought nothing, ſhe flung the ſtone, becauſe ſhe had nothing elſe to fling; it was ſtrange that it ſhou'd hit him ſo pat, it might have hit another as well as him; the ſtone might have fallen to the ground as well as on him; and that it ſhould be by a woman, and a milſtone too: Milſtones are not uſed on the top of a Tower, and a milſtone broken that a woman could lift it, and that hee ſhould bee killed by a milſtone, and not with a ſword; nay, might all the ſtanders by ſay, This God hath done, he was the ſonne of a ſtrange woman, and a woman hath killed him; hee killed his brethren upon one ſtone, and now a ſtone hath killed him; all the world might bee able to ſay, This God hath done.

The uſe of this is,

Uſe 1. Not to complain of Gods dealing.

Firſt, let no creature in the world complaine of Gods dealing, if he puniſh us according to our kind; hee that *kills with the ſword, ſhall bee killed with the ſword. Hee that ſtops his eares from hearing the poore*, what ſhall his his puniſhment be? *He ſhall cry and not be heard. He that ſhewes no mercy*, how ſhall he be puniſhed? *He ſhall receive no mercie, Iam. 2. 13. Woe to thee that ſpoyledſt, and waſt not ſpoyled: when thou ceaſeſt ſpoyling, others ſhall ſpoyle thee, Iſai. 33. 1. Iudge not*, (ſaith Chriſt;) What if I do? *Then thou ſhalt be judged.* Thus God recompenceth the fruit of a mans doing. Here is no *Momus* can complain; no

Iam. 2. 13.

Iſai. 33. 1.

no *Aristarchus*, that can find fault with the justice and judgement of God.

Secondly, it is not amisse to consider and see how God proportions punishments to sinnes.

In { Kind, Quantity, Quality, Time, Place, and other circumstances.

In kind: *He shall eate the fruit of his owne wayes*, that is, he shall be punished in kind. It is a similitude from a tree, every tree brings forth according to its own kind; if it be an Apple-tree, it brings forth Apples; if a Crabtree, Crabs; a Pear-tree, Peares: So every sinner shall be punished in their kind; a Minister shall bee punished in his kind, wicked Masters in their kind, servants in theirs, rich in theirs, poore in theirs: if a man be a drunkard, hee shall bee punished in one kind; if he be an adulterer, in another: *Every man shall eat the fruit of his own wayes.* Every sinne brings a homogeneall punishment, according to the nature of it. I cannot stand to follow this, though it bee very cleare in Scripture.

Use 2. How God proportions judgements to sins.

Secondly, it is in Quantity; God proportions the punishment according to the sinne; hee that *sowes sparingly*, *shall reap sparingly*; but hee that *sowes bountifully*, *shall reap bountifully*. Little sinnes, little punishments; and great sinnes, great

punishments. There are little sins, moat sins, gnat sins, & there are Camell sins: so there are little and great punishments, some meet with many, some with fewer stripes. Just according to a mans sinnes, so the Lord shapes out the punishment, for great sinners, great plagues; & for every one according to his own measure. God hath a pair of Ballance that he means to weigh men in: As he weighed *Belshazzar*, so hee will weigh thee, and look how much sinne thou putteſt in one scale, so much punishment God will put in the other; hee will not abate thee one oath, not one idle thought, not one breach of the Sabbath, not one neglect of hearing the Word, or of other duties: the Lord will put wrath in one ballance, as thou putteſt sinne in the other, he will make the scales even to a haire: as hee dealt with *Belshazzar*, *He will Lay righteousneſſe to the line*, and judgement to the plummet, and weigh thee out in the scales, and thou shalt have just according to thy sinnes.

As the Lord deales with his owne people, hee will not abate so much as a cup of cold water, but it shall bee rewarded: hee will reward all, from the greateſt to the least; so hee will deale with the wicked, there shall no sinne passe unpunished.

Again, there is a proportion in the Quality. If *Adam* sinne in eating, he shall be punished in eating; If the women of *Iudah* sinne in apparrell, they shall be punisheſt in apparrell, *Isai.* 3. 24. In *Wiſ.* 11. 16. *a man shal be punished in that that he sins*

Isaai. 3. 24.
Wisd. 1. 6

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in; if *Absolom* sinne in his haire, hee shall be punished in it; *Nebuchadnezzar* might finde his sin in his brutish condition, and the prodigall might find his sin in the Hog-trough: So if thou finde thy selfe in want, consider if thou hast not wasted thy meanes, if thou hast not been vaine in building, and prodigall in spending, or gaming, or unnecessary bounty, and immoderate liberality, beyond thy means: Art thou punished in thy Trade, or Children, &c. see if thou hast not sinned in them: for where there is sin, God will proportion the punishment to the sin.

Fourthly, God proportions the punishment to the sin in regard of the time. The same houre that *Belshazzar* was drinking and quaffing in the Temple, the same houre the hand of God was upon him; if it be not upon thee the same houre, it may be to morrow at the same hour. It may be thou hast sinned this day at such an hour, it may bee God may strike thee to morrow at the same time, or this day seven-night, it may be the next yeare. *Nebuchadnezzar* was warned of his pride this yeare, and the same time twelvemonth the Lord *drove him from among men.* So in *Acts* 13.42. one Sabbath day the Jewes heard *Paul* preach, & went out before the Sermon was quite done, they were not able to stand to the blessing; the same day seven-night the Lord made the Apostles shake off the dust of their feet against them, and leave them to a reprobate sense. Acts 23.42

Fifthly, the Lord proportions his punishments to the place. It is strange many times, that the drunkard

drunkard should get his death in the same Ale-house where he got his liquor. In *Iudg.* 7. in that story of *Oreb* and *Zeeb*, *Oreb* at the rock *Oreb*, devised against the children of Israel, and upon the same rock he was killed. And *Zeeb* another persecuter of the children of God, so the Psalmist calls them, he at the Wine-presse of *Zeeb*, tooke victuals from the children of Israel, and in the same place his own life was taken away.

Iudg. 7.

Simile. Just as Judges and Magistrates at this day, they hang up men where they have done the villany. As they doe with Dogs and Cats, they carry them to the place, to the Cellar or the Buttery, where they have done the mischiefe. But the beasts themselves, though they have no reason, are able so pick out the meaning of it. The Lord punisheth sinners in the same place. Here where thou hast been deafe to heare the word of God, when thy heart riseth against the preacher; in the same place (it may bee) the Lord will deliver thee up to a reprobate sense. In the same place, at the Lords Table, where thou commest unworthily, thou shalt eat and drinke thine own damnation.

FINIS.